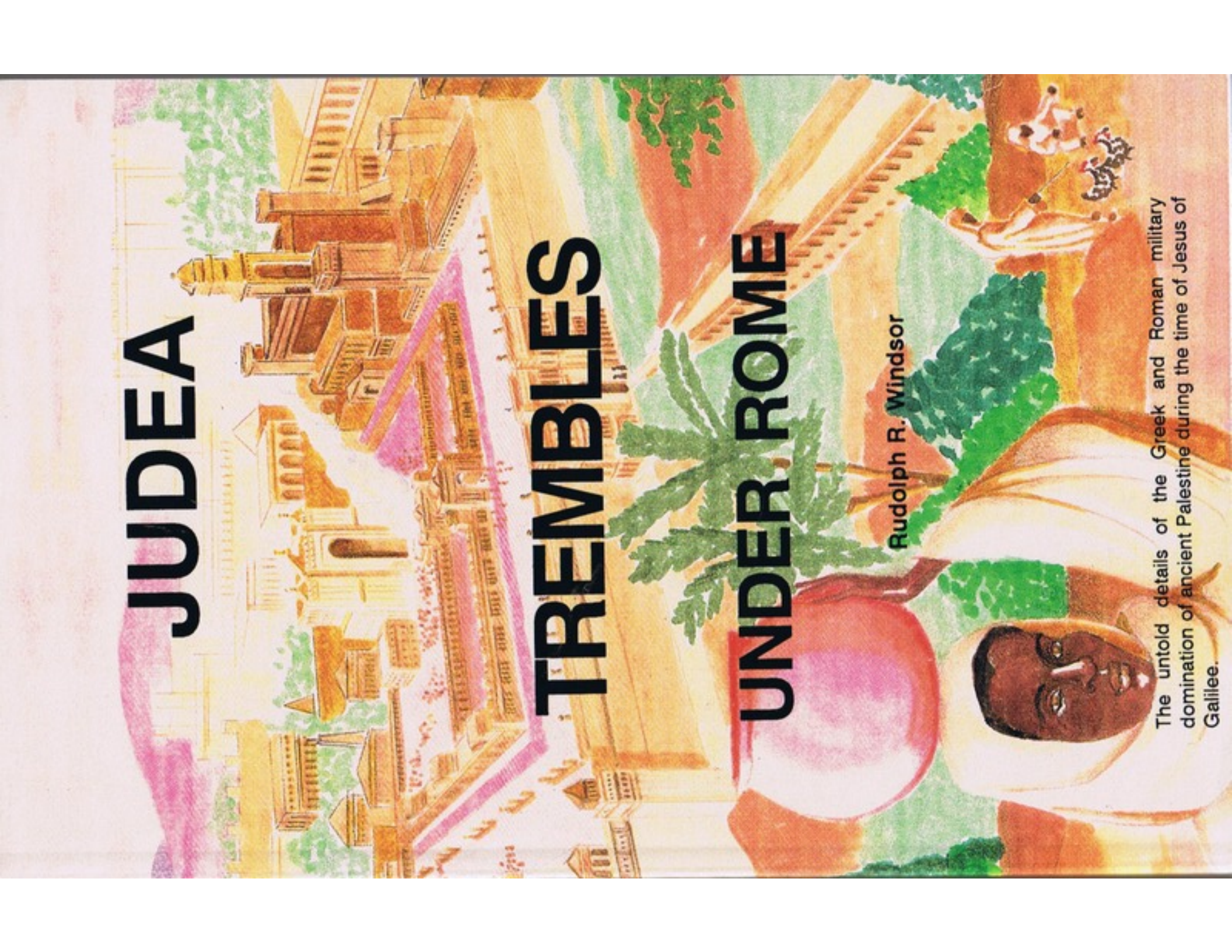




JUDEA

TREMbles

UNDER ROME

Rudolph R. Windsor



The untold details of the Greek and Roman military domination of ancient Palestine during the time of Jesus of Galilee.

JUDEA TREMBLES UNDER ROME

A provocative and historical blueprint of the times and conditions that gave rise to the Greek and Roman conquest of ancient Palestine. Windsor gives detailed information of how the ancient Judeans had to suffer under the Greek and Roman oppression. In clear lucid prose, the author outlines the development of the Essenic sect and customs, depicting how Christianity developed from the Essenes. Professor Windsor utilizes various ancient sources such as: the Dead Sea Scrolls, biblical texts, Josephus' works, and many other scholarly sources.

His research encountered startling information dealing with many rebel leaders against Rome who called themselves messiahs and prophets. He addresses the questions. Who was the real Jesus? What was his mission?

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BIOGRAPHY

Rudolph Windsor was born in Long Branch, New Jersey. After living in a number of Jersey communities, his family settled in Philadelphia where he attended Community College, studying Psychology and Political Science; Gratz College, where he majored in Aramaic and Hebrew; and Temple University where he majored in Middle Eastern Studies. At the present time, he holds a Master's Degree and is a candidate for his doctorate at the University of Metaphysics.

He recommends and encourages others to acquire as much formal education and spiritual knowledge as one is able. He says that, "if a formal education is not probable at any given time, then read as many books as you can and keep an open mind." Furthermore, he insists that

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through "prayer, meditation and patience, you will discover who you really are and tap the power that is deep within you." In addition, he has four sons and a daughter.

His motive for writing this book was, "to reveal additional information concerning what really transpired two thousand years ago in Roman-dominated Judea-Palestine." Professor Windsor is a strong advocate of the economic and cultural development of the Afro-American community. In serving the community, he has been a member and president of various organizations. To name a few, he was a delegate to the Black Power Conference in 1968 and was designated a delegate on behalf of the oppressed Ethiopians to meet with Mr. Makonen, an official of the Ethiopian Mission to the UN in the early 1970's.

Moreover, Mr. Windsor is the author of five books; and in 1986, he formed his own company called the Windsor Golden Series. Over the years, Professor Windsor has appeared on radio and TV talk shows, lectures at congregations, organizations, universities and has traveled to Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The untold details of the Greek and Roman military domination of Palestine during the time of Jesus of Galilee.

Rudolph R. Windsor

Windsor Golden Series
P.O. Box 310393
Atlanta, GA 31131

First Edition

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(paperback)

Second Printing, 1997

Third Printing, 1999

Fourth Printing, 2004

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Manufactured in the United States of America
ISBN: 0-9620881-2-9 (paperback)

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 93-94988

Acknowledgements

I want to take this time to express my warmest thanks to Maurice E. Kennedy, Jr. who committed his untiring time, labor and interest to the publication of this book. He was indeed a blessing from Heaven. Second, to my very close and dear friend and wife, Mary L. (Robinson) Windsor who rendered her dedicated assistance in all phases of the production of this book. I express my sincere and tender gratitude. Also, special thanks go out to Valerie Rogers who contributed her efforts in relationship to the arrangement of the title and embellished the final touches to the sketches.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge Cole Windsor, my brother, who provided me with expert information concerning the structure of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. His extensive knowledge pertaining to Judaic laws and customs proved to be very invaluable. Last, but not least, I would like to thank Cole Windsor and Maurice Kennedy, Sr. who accompanied me to the Holy Land to explore Jerusalem, Jericho, Masada, the Dead Sea, the Galilee area etc.

Foreword

The reason why the author wrote this book is quite evident to me. He has a genuine and profound interest and concern for mankind. It is his expressed desire that people of all persuasions are given additional information as to the life, times and conditions that faced the ancient Hebrew people.

The purpose for writing this book was to provide enlightenment of the religio-political and economic circumstances that plagued the occupants of ancient Judea/Palestine and the surrounding geography.

I hope that *Judea Trembles Under Rome* will be used as a viable resource to people of all ages for many generations to come and will contribute to the knowledge and appreciation of our heritage.

Moreover, the footnotes are found at the end of each chapter.

M.L. (Guyton) Windsor MBA

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Preface

I wrote this book with the idea in mind that I would expand into a different area that was not covered in my previous books. I must confess that the research has been laborious, requiring the reading of many, many books, checking and rechecking, reading hour after hour, day after day, month after month and year after year. The research extended long after midnight until the eyes became tired and the body yearning for a diversion. This book required a sacrifice so great that I care not to mention here. For many years, I postponed the writing of this book knowing that some people would not take a liking to the contents. But, some force kept urging me onward to undertake this project. As time elapsed, I realized that new ideas are not readily accepted, nevertheless, one must stand up for what one believes especially when the facts are overwhelming. If some people are hurt because of what I have written, it was not my desire to do so.

After the Civil war in this country, I am certain that many White southerners were hurt because they had lost their precious wealth in slaves, and no doubt, they became very bitter because their ego was deflated, not having the authority over the Black man as they once had. If some people shall say that I shouldn't have written this book, because it hurts some people, then I say the North should have never fought the Civil war, because it hurt the southerners.

In view of this, if we can learn from the past, correct the mistakes which we inherited from our ancestors, search for the good which has been bequeathed to us, take and practice it in our daily lives; then, if we do this, we shall make our contribution to a more wholesome society and a better world.

There is so much more that I could have written; however, in this writing, space and time does not permit.

Sometimes, we don't get the opportunity to finish everything that we would like to have completed; as a result, we have to finish it in the next incarnation, I shall see you then.

Peace
Rudolph R. Windsor

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א"י מלך נאמן

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד

כְּרוֹךְ שֵׁם קְבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתָ דְּעֵלְמָא וְעַד

וְאַהֲבַת אֵת יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיךָ בְּכָל לִבְכָּךְ,

וּבְכָל גִּפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ. וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים

הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם, עַל לִבְכָּךְ.

וּשְׁנֵיתָם לְבִנְיָךְ, וְדַבָּרְתָּ בָם בְּשַׁבְּתְךָ

בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכְכְךָ

וּבְקוֹמְךָ. וְקִשְׁרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל יָדֶיךָ,

וְהָיוּ לְמַטָּפֶת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ. וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל

מְזוֹזֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ.

The translation of the above writing:

"Here, O Israel: The Lord Our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thine heart, etc." (Deut. 6:4-9)

The picture below was taken from
The book: Lost Tribes a Myth by
Doctor Allen Godbey, Duke Uni-
versity Press, 1930.



Judean Hebrews from Upper Senegal West Africa

These men are the descendants of the ancient Judean nation. Their ancestors fled from Jerusalem before the arrival of the Roman armies which were under the command of Vespasian and General Titus in 70 A.D.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD

Part One

In order to understand the period of the Second Temple (332 B.C. - 73 A.D.) it is absolutely necessary for me to give you the historical background that led up to the events in the life of Jesus and Pontius Pilate. Without this background, it is very difficult to understand the Judean people. When there is no background, it is like watching the end of a movie without seeing the beginning.

The last name of the nation of the Israelites was called Judea and this name was derived from the tribe of Judah. This tribe was the ruling tribe, and the descendants of King David came from this tribe, which was located in the southern half of the nation. For this reason, the people of this area were known as Judeans or Jews. Hereinafter, I shall use this name, Judeans, to refer to this people.

In the fourth century, (c. 332 B.C.) Alexander, the Great conquered the then known world. The empire of this Greek ruler included Asia Minor (Turkey), the entire Middle East and Egypt. After Alexander's death, his empire was divided among his top four generals, Cassander ruled Macedonia, Lysimachus ruled Thrace (eastern Greece), Ptolemy ruled Egypt, and Seleucus ruled Syria and Babylon. These four generals established dynasties in their particular areas. As a result of the Greek conquest of the Middle East, this entire area became Hellenized; that is, the people of the conquered

nations were forced to adopt the idol gods and culture of the Greeks. In the Middle East, many of the Greek soldiers remained there to support their generals.

At this time, the Greek kings of Egypt and Syria influenced many Judeans to adopt Greek customs and idol gods and the Hellenized Judeans in Jerusalem abrogated the laws of Moses. A Judean Benjamite by the name of Onias Menelaus wanted to be high priest; so he went to Syria and asked the Greek king, Antiochus IV to assist him to acquire that office. Antiochus agreed to do it providing that he keep his promise to give him a large sum of money. Then the king dispatched a large detachment of troops to accompany Menelaus back to Jerusalem to guarantee that he would be installed as high priest.

The majority of the Judeans were not only angry that a member of the Hellenist pagan party was made high priest, but also angry because a Benjamite, not of the family of Aaron, was installed in that office. It is written in the law of Moses that only a male of the offsprings of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron can be the high priest. In protest against Menelaus and his pagan-Hellenist party, thousands of Jerusalemites fled the city and dwelled in the wilderness of Judea and in the Jordan River area around the Dead Sea.

In the year 169 B.C., Antiochus decided to attack Egypt. After his military campaign there, he returned through Judea and heard that his supporter (Menelaus), the leader of the Hellenized political party, was engaged in a civil war against those Judeans who believed in practicing the laws of God. Antiochus attacked Jerusalem, entered into the Holy of Holies of the Temple, displayed contempt for the God of Israel, removed the table, the golden altar, the candlestick and the golden vessels. Moreover, Antiochus declared that he had seen in the Temple the statue of the law giver,

Moses, sitting on an ass who had given the Judeans inhuman laws, to keep them separated from other people. The Greek-Syrians resented these black Judeans because the latter had a God, laws which prevented or prohibited them to violate the Sabbath, to eat unclean food, to worship idol gods and to engage in sexual orgies.

Another lie disseminated by the Greek-Syrians relates the following stories: It was reported that Antiochus saw in the Temple of Jerusalem a Greek sitting on a bed begging to be released, as it was a custom of the Judeans to kill a Greek once a year and feed on his intestines and vowing hatred against all Greeks.

After Antiochus returned to Syria, he felt very humiliated because the Roman Senate ordered him to cease his attacks on Egypt. Moreover, he felt that the Judeans gloated over his degradation and he became more and more angry because he had to pretend friendship with the Romans. In the most vicious ways, he began to unleash his cruelties against the Judeans. Antiochus ordered his deputy Apollonius to Jerusalem and on a Sabbath, the Greek troops attacked the people, killed men, youths, took women and children prisoners and sold them into slavery. Furthermore, these fierce Greek troops burned many buildings in the city and as a result of this disaster, many Levites and priests fled from the city. Soon after, Antiochus issued an order to all the towns of Judaea, to give up the laws of their God and to sacrifice to Greek gods.

Antiochus decreed that unclean animals should be used as sacrifices. Under harsh punishment, he prohibited the keeping of the Sabbath, circumcision and the eating of clean food. All these laws, distinguished the Judeans from the other nations. Circumcision would easily be detected because the Greek performed their athletic games naked. They had no virtue for chastity or modesty. The idol god Jupiter-Zeus was placed on the



These Ethiopian Judean boys are praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem; they are wearing phylacteries and prayer shawls as their ancestors did 2000 years ago. These and other laws and customs, the Greeks prohibited when they invaded Judea.

altar in Jerusalem and unclean sacrifices were made in his honor. Heinrich Graetz tells us in his monumental book: "Death threatened all those who openly confessed Judaism, and they dared not call themselves Judeans." Openly, the Judeans could call themselves only Greeks.¹

Full Scale Rebellion In Judea

A number of successive events were operating in Judea which contributed to the rebellion:

1. The constant attacks of Greek troops.
2. The sale of the people into slavery.
3. The forcing of the Judeans to fight to the death as gladiators.
4. The Greek urging of people to participate nude in the Greek Olympic games in the sight of the Temple in Jerusalem.
5. The increasing number of Judeans apostates and heretics called Hellenists who sided with the Greeks.
6. The Greek abolition of the law of Moses² and the substitution of idol god worship with the sacrifice of unclean animals.

All these factors were operating concomitantly to bring the rebellion to the boiling point. The Greek Syrian commander came to the town of Modin, less than ten miles north of Jerusalem, and proclaimed to Judeans to forsake the law of Moses and become idolaters. Mattithias, and his five sons, (the most famous was Judah Maccabee) refused to obey the Greeks, he yelled with a loud voice, "Whoever is zealous for the law, and whosoever wishes to support the Covenant, follow me." They attacked all the Greek troops, fled to the caves in

the hills, and there they planned their strategy. After numerous Judeans joined their ranks, Judah Maccabee, the leader, engaged many Greek armies and defeated them. Judah marched his army to Jerusalem and subdued many of the Judean Hellenists there in the Temple area. However, the die-hearts secured themselves within the walled fortified fortress called the Birah or Acra, later called the Tower of Antonia. This fortress was located on the northwest wall of the Temple Mount and could not be taken easily.

When Judah and his men came into the Temple, they destroyed the image of the idol Zeus, which was erected on the altar, tore down the statue of Antiochus, removed all unclean objects, and purified the entire Temple area. All this Judah completed on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of *Kislev* (November) 165 B.C. This rededication of the Temple is called Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights. There are two explanations for Hanukkah: The first meaning is that only a small container of pure oil was found with the seal of the high priest, enough to last for one day; however, miraculously, it burned for eight days. As a result of this, the Judeans light one candle a day for eight days. The second meaning of Hanukkah relates to this story: During the religious persecution of the Judeans, the Greeks didn't permit the people to practice the law of Moses; this is to say the light of the Torah (law) went out. But, because of the victories of Judah Maccabee over the Greeks, the light of the Torah can now shine through study and practice.

As Moses of old was the deliverer of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, Judah Macabee and his brothers were the deliverers or messiahs in the time of the Greek-Syrians. Judah and his brothers brought religious and political freedom, he installed God fearing men in the Temple. In spite of the efforts of Judah, the Greek-Syrian soldiers and the Judeans Hellenists still

held the fortified garrison called the Baris or Birah. In the beginning of Judah's entry into Jerusalem, he was not able to dislodge the Hellenists from that fortress; but later, he succeeded.

The Judean Political Parties

By the year 160 B.C., there developed three political parties among the Judeans. First, there were the Hasidim or pious ones. These adhered to the written law, the oral law (transmitted by tradition), as well as the enactments legislated to meet the necessity of everyday life. Then, there were the Hellenists who held contempt for Judean culture of virtue and introduced the lewd customs of the Greeks. These Hellenists were scorned by the majority of the people. They included priests, Temple officers, and aristocrats who held political and military posts in Jerusalem. Finally, there were the Hasmoneans; this word is derived from the name Hasmonai who was the grandfather of Mattathias. As I have mentioned, Matathias was the man who began the rebellion against the Greeks in the town of Modin. He had five sons who played important roles in the rebellion; their names are as follows: Judah Maccabee, Johanan, Simon, Eleazar, and Jonathan. The common denominator between the Hasidim and the Hasmoneans was that both believed in the law and the sanctity of the Temple. The Hasmoneans believed not only in religious freedom but also in political independence of their country. This meant the destruction of the Greek-Syrian armies and the removal of the puppet Hellenist high priest who was appointed and supported by the Greeks.

Judah Maccabee carried his ideas for complete independence to the next stage by attacking the fortress of the Hellenists at Jerusalem. The Greeks sent

(c. 143 B.C.)



The three political parties I mentioned above: Hassidim, Hellenists and Hasmoneans existed in the days of the Maccabees. However, later on, there developed four other politico-religious parties known as, the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Galileans.³

After the destruction of the City of Carthage in north Africa and the conquest of various tribes in Europe, it became the intention of Rome to expand her empire to the East. Greece and Asia Minor fell to the might of Rome; and there was no doubt in the mind of many eastern states that Syria, Judea Parthia (Persia), and Egypt would be next. As a result of a family feud between the two Hebrew sons of Alexander Janaeus for the throne of Judaea, the Roman general, Pompey decided against Aristobulus II and supported Hycanus for high priest and leader of the Judeans. Hycanus was the elder son and entitled to the throne, but the real reason why Pompey supported him was because he felt that Hycanus would make a better puppet for Rome. Aristobulus figured that Pompey would not decide in his favor for the throne; so he rushed to Jerusalem and locked the gates of the City.

Pompey Besieged Jerusalem

After Pompey and his legions got into the City, the patriotic Judeans locked themselves behind the Temple walls. Pompey realized that he had a major siege on his hands and he summoned for his battling rams (engines of war) from Tyre. He penetrated the Temple wall and about ten thousand Judeans lost their lives. The legions of Rome rushed into the Temple court, where no alien was supposed to enter; they killed the priest as they were sacrificing before the altar, then Pompey took the audacity to penetrate into the most holy place. He did this to ascertain whether or not there were any images of a god inside; to his amazement, he didn't find any.

The invasion of the Roman armies into Judea brought the independence of Judea to an end. From this time until the total destruction of the City of Jerusalem (in 70 A.D.) by general Titus, Rome interfered in the social, economic, religious and political affairs of Judea on a grand scale. General Pompey, deprived Hyrcanus of his royal title and gave him only the high priesthood. The previous high priest of the Hasmonean family held both titles of high priest and king. The Romans, prohibited the latter title because kingship meant independence and independence meant rebellion against Rome.⁴ Generally speaking, kingship and rebellion were two things the Romans did not tolerate. In fact, Roman history has shown that Rome suppressed all rebellions with the utmost cruelty. Judea now became a Roman province and was made a part of Roman Syria. The Roman governor of Syria had a subordinate official under him called the procurator.

The procurators of Judea were Roman officials appointed by the emperors, entrusted with the management of monetary matters; they possessed political and military authority. The most infamous

procurator was Pontius Pilate (25-35 A.D.) who crucified Jesus and many of other Judeans.

The question now is what was the real reason why the Romans executed Jesus. To answer this question and others, I will have to give you a lot of background information on Hebrew law, customs, traditions, culture and history.

The Messianic Concept

In ancient Israel, like other ancient people, the Hebrews believed in the idea of a messiah. The Hebrew word *mashiah* (Messiah, English) means anointed one. This meaning developed because the high priests and the kings in Israel were anointed with oil. The process of anointing in Israel became to mean investing the high priest and the king with power and authority (Exodus 29:7; I Sam 16:13). Many of the kings in ancient Israel were anointed by the prophets or in Solomon's case, he was anointed by the high priest Zadok (I Kings 1:30). The kings in Israel were considered messianic kings which really means only anointed kings.

In many cases in ancient Israel, the head of the state or the kings were considered deliverers, redeemers, saviors, or rescuers. Such was the case with Moses, who with the help of the Creator, delivered the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt. The kings in ancient Israel would lead his armies in battle or he would appoint a general to lead it. Many times the Creator God would instruct the king concerning the battle plan (read Exodus 14:1-31; Num. 31:1-12; Exodus 17:8; Joshua 6:1-21; Judges 3:15, 6:11-7:25; Sam. 15:1-9; 16:13; II Sam. 5:17-25; Josephus Antiquities Book 13.7). With the understanding that the kings of Israel were anointed, hence messiahs, the words kings and messiahs became synonymous terms. In

addition, the chief duties of the kings of Israel were to maintain national security, keep and enforce the law of God, protect the citizenry from foreign invasion, and gather together the captive dispersed exiles of the Judean people from around the world.⁵ These have always been the main duties of the leaders and kings in ancient Israel. These points are Judaic concepts, traditions, history, prophesy and law as they pertain to the Judaic messianic kings.

Now, I realize that other religions and nationalities have stipulations concerning the purpose and duties of their messiahs. They have that right; just as the Judeans have a right to interpret and believe what the Hebrew Scriptures say about the purpose of the Hebrew messiah. Most religions of the world have their saviors: in the Far East, several religions call him the Avatar, in Islam he is called the Madhi; among Christians, he is called the Christ, and among most Hebrews and Judeans he is referred to as the messiah. According to Hebrew law and history, there has always been more than one messiah. They came at different periods of time when the Israelites were under captivity, slavery, oppression, or under attack from foreign nations. The Creator would send a messiah or savior when the people cried unto him and repented of their wrong doings. Such were the examples mentioned in the book of Judges, concerning this matter I have already mentioned. The Christians have one savior only and his name is Jesus Christ. There has been more than one messiah or savior among the Hebrews and all of them had different names. All these various messiahs, kings, saviors and deliverers lived and achieved their objectives before the birth of Jesus Christ. Some of the Hebrew messiahs were Moses, Joshua, Othaniel (Judges 3:9), Ehud (Judges 3:15), Deborah & Barak (Judges 4:4-6), Gideon (Judges 6:8-13), Tola, Jair (Judges 10:1-3) Jephthah (Judges 11:1-7), Samson (Judges

13:1-25), King Saul (I Sam 15:1-3), David (I Sam 16:13), King Hezekiah (II Kings 19:1-37), King Josiah (II Kings 22:1-23:37) Judah Maccabee (Book of the Apocrypha, II Maccabees 8:1-36; 10:1-38. Simon, brother of Judas (I Maccabees 16:1-10).

The aforementioned military generals were messianic leaders in the sense that they fought captivity, oppression, and gathered the Israelites back to their land and to the law of Moses. I repeat, the Judean concept of the messiah is a fighting leader for defense and justice, afterwards, he will bring peace. The famous African Judean scholar, Maimonides wrote: "If there arises a king from the House of David who meditates on the Torah (law), occupies himself with the commandments, observes the precepts prescribed in the written and oral law, prevail upon Israel to walk in the way of the Torah, fights the battles of the Lord, it may be assumed that he is the messiah. If he does these things and succeeds, rebuilds the sanctuary (Temple) on its sight, and gather the disperse of Israel, he is beyond all doubt the messiah."⁶ Up to this time, events and history have demonstrated that no Judean Davidic messiah has arisen that fits the above description since the fall of the first Temple (586 B.C.).⁷ The Davidic messiah and his kingdom became the foundation and origin of the "Kingdom of Heaven" or the "Kingdom of God" concept articulated vehemently by later Judeans.

The Kingdom of God

Like most conquerors, the brutal Romans had to maintain their hostile domination over the Judeans by sheer force. She dispatched more legions into Judea, taxed the people heavily, disregarded the religious sensitivities of the people, garrisoned Roman troops

inside the Temple Complex, took down the high priest and installed puppet ones (Uncle Toms), and supported the half-breed Judean family of Herod to be king. The family of Herod was interested in only power and money. He further outraged the moral feelings of the Judeans by having games performed nude in the arenas and gave the most important political appointments to his family.⁸ With frequent oppression and executions by the Roman authorities and King Herod, the anger of the Judean people grew more intense. Many Judeans believed that the dawn of the messianic age was impending and that God would establish a righteous kingdom that would overthrow the persecution of the Romans and the Herodian family.

The anticipation of this righteous kingdom (under the assistance and rule of God's laws) became known as the "Kingdom of God," or the "Kingdom of Heaven." The word "Heaven" here is symbolic of God. Hence, God's presence abiding over the new Judean kingdom⁹ after the overthrow of the Roman and the Herodian family.

The "Kingdom of Heaven" is not a new idea, and it didn't originate with John the Baptist or Jesus, but with their Judean ancestors. Moreover, the Hebrew Scriptures are impregnated with references to the "Kingdom of God." This idea is credible as long as we understand that the "Kingdom of Heaven" among the ancient Hebrews meant a righteous kingdom under the practice of God's laws as they were given to Moses. The Creator God instructed Moses to tell the children of Israel: "Now, if you shall obey my voice and indeed keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all the peoples: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation..." (Exodus 19:3-6). Furthermore, it is written: "In the day of these kings (gentiles kings) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed..." (Daniel 2:44).

The kingdom that Daniel says God is going to set up is the righteous Kingdom of Israel. The Israelites are referred to as the holy ones or saints: "The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom and shall possess the kingdom forever..." (Daniel 7:18). In I Kings 9:1-5, the Creator God promised Solomon: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever... When God established the kingdom for Solomon that kingdom was the "Kingdom of Heaven" or the "Kingdom of God."

During the Roman domination of Judea, many Judeans were waiting for the advent of the messiah who would expel the Romans and the evil Herodian family. They thought the coming of the "Kingdom of Heaven" and the messiah was near because they thought God's kingdom was suppose to follow immediately the fourth beast (Rome) spoken of by Daniel, the man of God (see Daniel 7:7) and because so much turmoil and persecution had overtaken them, they thought that the prophesy of Jeremiah 30:1-9 had been fulfilled in their days. With this conception in mind, some Galileans and Essenes of the third and fourth religio-political philosophy proclaimed to their countrymen: "repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

The Rise of the Freedom Fighters

Rebellions became very common among the Judean people because of the greed, brutality, Uncle Tomism of the Herodian family and the successive invasions of various Roman armies. A Judean rebel leader by the name of Hezekiah (sometimes written Ezekias) organized a band of freedom fighters to oppose Roman intrusions into Judea (c.46 B.C.).¹⁰

Just eight years earlier, the Roman proconsul (military governor) Marcus Licinius Crassus¹¹ had at his command

100,000 Roman soldiers. His marching orders were to engage the Parthians (Persians, today called Iranians) but he went out of his way and entered Jerusalem, by force of arms, to steal the treasury of the Temple which Pompey had left. Crassus took from the Temple a golden bar, the two thousand talents¹² and all the golden vessels of the Temple worth about another eight thousand talents. Altogether, Crassus took more than ten thousand pounds of gold and silver worth millions of dollars. This amount did not include the annual taxes that the people paid to the Romans.

Obviously, Hezekiah, the rebel leader was well aware of the sacking of the Temple by Crassus. Hezekiah, (like the late Jesus) was a resident of Galilee and most historical records reveal that the Galileans were the most fanatical rebels.¹³ After Crassus departed from Jerusalem, he attacked Parthia and suffered a great defeat. The Parthians executed Crassus. His legate Cassius Longinus¹⁴ returned to Syria with hardly ten thousand soldiers. Hezekiah, the rebel leader, and the Judeans rejoiced at the fall of Crassus. However, the oppression from the Romans became worse and Cassius sold thirty thousand Judean rebels into slavery.¹⁵

Hezekiah gathered his men together in Galilee, they attacked Roman and Herodian forces, they struck at their economic interest, plundered their arsenals, and took supplies from their caravans. The Judean rebels were called robbers by the Romans and Herod; but the Judeans called them freedom fighters who sought to restore their honor and country. The people were very angry at Antipater the Edomite, and father of Herod, because he played into the hands of the Romans; he installed his sons in positions of control over the government; and cared only about amassing power and wealth for his family. His elder son, Phasaël, he appointed to be governor of Judea and Jerusalem, and

the second, Herod, a youth of hardly twenty one, governor of Galilee. It was this Herod who exterminated many of the offsprings of the Maccabean priest-kings, and their families because they were the rightful heirs to the throne. In addition, Herod pursued relentlessly, Hezekiah and his band and captured many of them. Without a trial, he executed them on the spot. Sextus Caesar, the Roman governor of Syria, bestowed on Herod many honors because he captured the rebels in the province of Galilee. But, at the same time that Herod was receiving glory, the loyal true patriots wept.

In view of the humiliation which the people suffered at the designs of the Idumaeans (Edomite family of Herod), many important families of Jerusalem became eager to inform the high priest, Hycanus, of their own and his new state of affairs. They told him that his distinguished position as high priest, ruler and head of the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court) was in name only, and that concrete authority was invested with Antipater and his sons Phasaël and Herod. They made it clear that the execution of Hezekiah and his freedom fighters, was an action of total disregard for the law. It took the constant pitiful complaints of the mothers of the executed before the weak Hycanus decided to summon Herod to stand trial.

The Trial of Herod

Finally, Hycanus notified governor Herod to appear before the Sanhedrin. Antipater warned his son of the consequences of appearing in Jerusalem without an escort and unarmed. He appeared before the court with his armed soldiers and many of the citizens waited with great eagerness for the trial. The court called for Herod, he entered dressed in his royal purple attire (instead of

black); he marched forward with an aggressive attitude with his escort. Almost the entire Sanhedrin appeared dumb-founded and intimidated. The only member that spoke up was Sameas, known in the Talmud as Simeon Ben Shetach: "Yet I do not make this complaint against Herod himself; he is to be sure more concerned for himself than for the laws; but my complaint is against yourselves, and your king (the high priest), who gave him a license so to do. However take you notice, that God is great, and that this very man, whom you are going to absolve and dismiss, for the sake of Hycanus, will one day punish both you and your king himself also."¹⁶

But when Hycanus saw that the Sanhedrin was ready to pronounce the sentence of death, he adjourned the session because he received a letter from the Roman governor of Syria informing him that should anything happen to Herod, Hycanus would have to answer to him. Because Hycanus feared for his own life by the Romans, he sent a letter to Herod informing him to escape out of Jerusalem. Then Herod went to Syria to meet with the Roman governor Sextus Caesar. The governor honored him and made him general and ruler of Coelestria. Finally, Herod returned to Judea and executed all the members of the Sanhedrin except Sameas because Herod deemed him a righteous man. This Herod is referred to in history as Herod the Great; he is to be distinguished from his son Herod Antipas who lived later during the time of Pontius Pilate and Jesus.

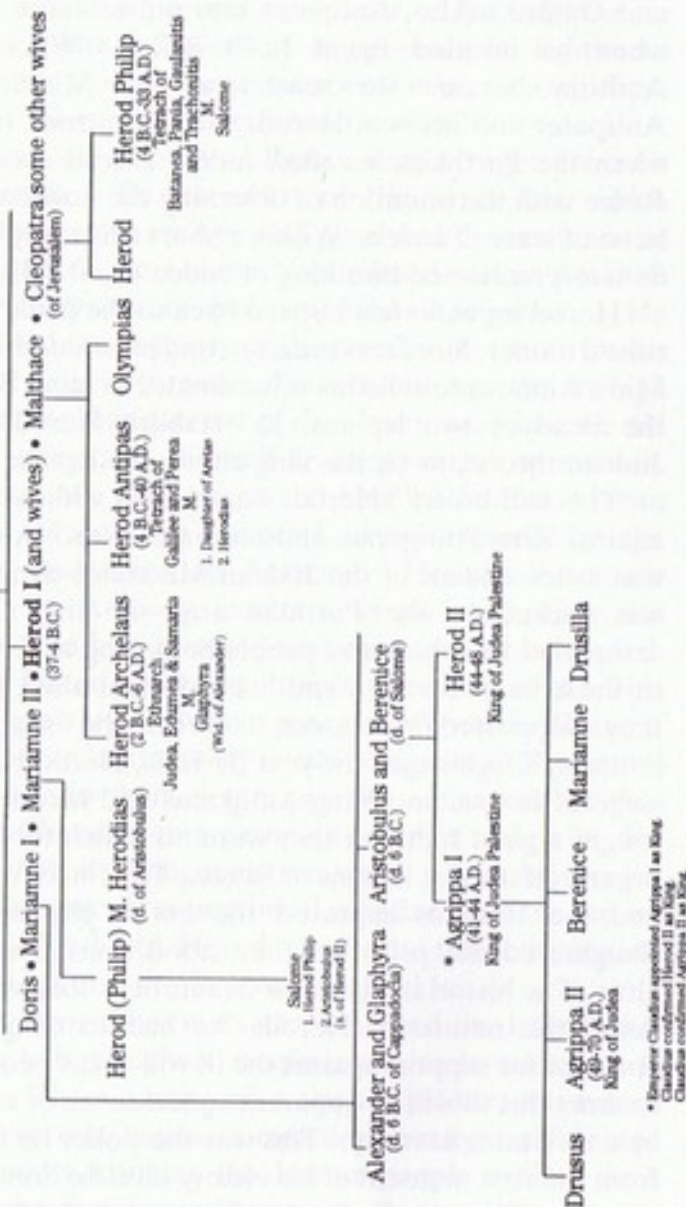
Herod Proclaimed a King

Antipater and Herod, the men of Idumaeen descent, supported (at one time or the other) most all of the Roman generals and rulers. Pompey appointed Antipater to be the governor of Judea; and the latter

THE DYNASTY OF HEROD THE GREAT

(c. 37 B.C.-70 A.D.)

Antipater (*The Edomite*) married Cyprus (*The Arabian*)



supported Pompey. Antipater supported the Roman general Cassius when he was the Roman ruler of Syria and Galilee. Also, Antipater sent aid to Julius Caesar when he invaded Egypt (c.49 B.C.). When Mark Anthony became the master of the Middle East, Antipater and his son, Herod, catered to him. Finally, when the Parthians invaded Judea, Herod escaped to Rome with the intention of obtaining the position of the head of state of Judea. Within a short while, the Roman Senate proclaimed him king of Judea in 40 B.C.

Herod immediately hurried back to the Middle East, raised money, hired mercenaries, and persuaded General Mark Anthony to send his subordinate, General Sosius at the head of two legions, to establish Herod on the Judean throne, to be the king chosen by Rome.

The half-breed¹⁷ Herod, waged war, without mercy, against King Antigonus and his supporters. Antigonus was a descendant of the Judean Maccabee dynasty and was backed by the Parthian army as king. Herod assembled two thousand people belonging to five towns in the area of Jericho, and burned them alive, because they supported Antigonus. With the support of Anthony's legions, in the year 37 B.C., Herod began his siege of Jerusalem. King Antigonus and his supporters fought a good fight but they were no match for the well organized trained legions of Rome. The forces of Herod and the Romans captured the entire city and even slaughtered the priest as they stood sacrificing at the altar. The historian Heinrich Graetz described with vivid detail the nature of Herod: "he had to cling to the Romans for support against the ill-will of his people, and to meet this ill-will by apparent concessions, or control it by unrelenting severity. This was the policy he followed from the first moment of his victory until he drew his last breath..." Even in the first confusion attendant upon the conquest of the Temple Mount, he had not lost his

coolness and vigilance, but had ordered his satellite Costabar to surround the exits of Jerusalem with his soldiers and thus prevent the escape of the unfortunate fugitives. The followers of Antigonus (the legitimate king) were slain in large numbers, many among them being of the most distinguished families."¹⁸

Herod, the puppet of Rome, didn't forget previous resentments. The members of the Sanhedrin, which more than ten years ago had proclaimed a sentence of death for him, were entirely murdered except Abtalion and Shemaya who had opposed Antigonus. He confiscated the property of the murdered victims for his personal gain. Moreover, he installed Ananael as high priest rather than a priest of the Hasmonean line; he did this to safeguard himself from powerful opposition. Antigonus, the legal priest and king of the Hasmonean line (of Maccabean descent), was captured by the Romans and taken to Anthony. Herod's vehement pleading to Anthony, contrary to all convention and practice, had him tortured and then ignobly beheaded. Why did Herod insist that Antigonus be beheaded? This act was contrary to Roman practice. When the Romans would capture a king, they would bring him to Rome and display him in their victory parades. It is evident that Herod suffered from a paranoid complex and guilt. He feared that if Antigonus remained alive, he or his descendants would return one day and reclaim the throne of Judea. No doubt, Herod transferred this sentiment to the Romans and the Romans adopted it.

Many would-be messiahs emerged in later years claiming to be prophets, magicians, miracle-workers and kings. These men of various caliber organized themselves into bands, companies, armies and became rebel leaders teaching the Judean people against their apathy, the flunkies in Jerusalem, the cruel illegitimate Herodians, and above all, against the oppressive alien

domination of the Romans. These would-be messiahs and kings with their aspirations for total freedom, transformed the Roman dream into a nightmare of rebellion, and Romans hunted down these rebels, sometimes called robbers, with relentless fury; and, didn't hesitate to move on them with rapid dynamic force. Such men were the following: Judas, the son of Ezekias; Simon; Athronges; John the Baptist; Jesus, the Galilean; Barabas; the Samaritan prophet; Theudas, the Magician; Jacob and Simon; the Egyptian false prophet; Manaham, the son of Judas of Galilee; and Bar Cochba. Flavius Josephus, the historian relates to us that there were many more rebel leaders, but their names and the details about them are unknown. Now, I shall continue my presentation about other rebel leaders.

Athronges (the rebel)

In the days Archelaus, the ruler of Judea (c. 3 A.D.) there arose a shepherd by the name of Athronges. He was a giant compared to most men and very muscular in physic. Because of the collaboration of the Herodian brothers with the cruel Romans, Athronges organized a large band of rebels to take vengeance on them. He divided his band into four units and appointed his brothers to be commanders, who were also very large of stature. Athronges placed a diadem (crown) on his head and called himself the king of Judea.¹⁹ By the way, anyone that called himself king and collected a crowd of people, the Roman considered this an act of treason. In the view of Rome, subject people could not have a king, the only exception being with the consent of Rome.

Simon, The Rebel King

During this same period, there was another rebel leader by the name of Simon. He was once a slave of Herod. He, too, was a tall handsome man with a robust body, no wonder people were attracted to him. Having a grandiose complex, he considered himself superior to other men. Because of the prevailing disorder of the times, like Athronges, he rose rapidly to a position of the leadership. In addition, he placed a diadem on his head and his followers declared him a king. He burnt down the royal palace at Jericho; set fire to many of the kings houses; and permitted his men to plunder their contents. Finally, he was stopped by Gratus and the Roman soldiers. Josephus, the Judean historian, writes that he fought courageously, but not skillfully. At this time the entire country became saturated with anarchy and rebellion.

The Reign of Terror of The Roman Officials

While the two sons of Herod (Archelaus and Herod Antipas) were in Rome seeking endorsement for the throne of Judea: This nation was in a state of anarchy. Some cities were set on fire; the citizens who supported the Romans were killed, including the innocent, and many men became leaders or took the title of king. The title of king became synonymous to rebellion to the Romans.

Before Archelaus departed for Rome, he invited the Roman governor of Syria to come to Jerusalem to keep order (c.5-7 A.D.). The Judean rebels dislike of the Herodians permitted them to be drawn into imprudent and worthless demonstrations; they lacked arms and had no concrete strategy of action; hysteria and high emotions

prevailed over reason. Convinced that there was no further need to remain in the city, he returned to Antioch, Syria. However, before he departed, he retained a Roman detachment of troops in Jerusalem.

It was during this time that Augusta Caesar sent Sabinus, the procurator, to Jerusalem to collect the wealth of the deceased Herod the Great. Sabinus entered the city with the help of the Roman soldiers which Varus stationed there. Sabinus had with him one to three legions that he commanded. The entry of additional Roman troops into Jerusalem only kindled more anger against the Romans.

The Feast of Weeks²⁰ was approaching and tens of thousands of Judeans were converging on Jerusalem from all parts of the country and the Roman empire. Seeing the presence of the Roman soldiers in the Holy City contributed to the already high tension in the city. The people were aware of the Roman intent to steal Herod's money and much of his personal property. General unrest ensued; the patriots elected their leaders; and occupied the Hippodrome and the Temple Mount. From these vantage points, they challenged the Romans who were stationed behind the walls of Herod's palace. Sabinus thought that he was trapped and outnumbered, as a result, he ordered an attack on the Temple and sent for reinforcements to Varus. The Judeans would have been victorious, but the Romans set fire to the roof of the colonnade.

The fire spread very quickly because of the wax that was used to seal the beams together. Many Judeans died from the fire and other met their death by the swords of the Romans.

Because of the onslaught of the Romans, the Judeans abandoned the Temple area and Sabinus stole about four hundred talents in gold or silver. The Judeans throughout the entire country became greatly angry

because of the plundering of the Temple treasury, the desecration of the holy places and the demolition of the corridors of the Temple. The indignities suffered by the people aroused their anger as well as their courage for insurrection against Rome.

Governor Varus not only had to worry about the Judeans in Jerusalem, but their brothers in the Galilean provinces were also in rebellion. Varus gathered his twenty thousand soldiers plus auxiliaries from the Nabathean Arabs south of Judea which composed the vanguard of his Roman army. They sacked and burnt many towns through which they passed. At the town of Sepphoris, Varus sold the people into slavery and burnt down the town. In one of these towns, the chief rebel leader Judas, the son of Ezekias, escaped. When the Jerusalemites heard of the approach of Varus's army, they abandoned their attacks on the Romans. Thus, the Judean revolt against Sabinus failed and the two thousand captured Judean prisoners were crucified²¹ by the orders of the Roman governor Varus.

Judas, The Galilean

Judas, the Galilean, became one of the most well-known Judean rebel leaders in his time. What were the conditions that sparked Judas to sedition and rebellion? Josephus informs us that Octavius, who received the title Augusta from the Roman Senate, appointed Quirinius (Cyrenius) to be governor of Syria and Coponius to be the procurator of Judea. At this time, Judea became a part of the Roman province of Syria and the procurator²² of Judea was under the authority of the governor of Syria. The mission of these two appointees was two-fold: First, to dispose of the money of the ex-ruler of Judea, Archelaus,²³ who was appointed by Augusta

Caesar; second, to obtain a census and an accounting of the people and property of Judea for the purpose of taxation.²⁴

Beginning in the 6 or 7 A.D., the Roman government levied a poll tax on every individual including women, slaves and servants. But, they exempted males under fourteen and females under twelve years of age, and the very old. In addition, the people had to pay taxes on their live stock and on the produce of the land. Furthermore, if a producer wanted to export his goods to another district or country, he had to pay a toll tax at certain locations.

This system of imposing taxation on the masses incited the tempers of all social groups. The Judeans felt that the Roman intervention in their political matters was bad enough, but now, they encroached into their private lives as well, taking head counts and taxing members of the families. Eventually, the key issue before the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court) was - "the census of taxation". The court put aside other questions and discussed the hot potato of "taxation". Such distinguished members as Hillel and Shammai, famous Pharisees, debated the issue and some members asked the question: "I, we become slaves to the Romans?" The Judean state was in such confusion and turmoil at this time because of the rebel leader Judas of Galilee.

Who was Judas, the Galilean? His home was the town of Gamala in Gaulanitis, a district ruled by Herod Antipas. We can locate Gamala twelve miles east of the Sea of Galilee. On other occasions, Josephus calls Judas the Galilean. This is understandable because Gamala is in the northern part of Israel near the district and the Sea of Galilee. Judas was the son of the rebel leader Ezekias and in Josephus' works, he is known as Hezekiah. This Galilean had been taught from his young age an extreme love for his country and no doubt a

strong antipathy for the Romans and Herodians. Judas became the leader of a faction which eventually became the ruler of Judea in 66-70 A.D. Judas, in the prime of his life, attracted many patriots to his cause, including influential Galileans. The Galileans were also known as zealots.²⁵

Judas took with him his zealots, and broke into Herod's armory at the Galilean capitol of Sepphoris; he then equipped his men and distributed to them some of the money he found. One of the chief supporters of Judas was Zadok, which Josephus spells Saduc. The nick name for the zealots was The Galileans. In fact, the word *zealots* became synonymous with Galileans and the word "Galileans" came to mean fanatics. According to the Judean historian, Josephus, Galileanism became the fourth political party in Judea.²⁶

Graetz relates to us that Judas taught that "obedience to the Roman law was disregard for the Divine law, for God alone was ruler, and could alone demand obedience; that it became, therefore, a clear and solemn duty to strain every nerve, and sacrifice property, and life, and family in this struggle against the usurper who exacted submission due to God alone." Judas philosophy found more acceptance as the Roman strangle hold tightened around the little state of Judea. Judas attributed unto himself the royal dignity says Josephus, that is he proclaimed himself king and galvanized young and old to his cause of national liberation.

In the meantime, the colleagues of Hillel, considered taxation so terrible that they devised various methods by which it could be circumvented.²⁷ Everyone that participated in this system of taxation, whether publican, tax collector or enforcer, were considered indecent and only worthy of contempt. Thus, I close another saga of a would-be messiah who proclaimed himself king, Judas, the Galilean.²⁸

What was the result of all this chaos in Judea and Galilee. Josephus tells us that the country was full of robberies,²⁹ murders and frequent rebellion; when various companies found someone to head them, they made them kings. Josephus said that this happened so frequently that he doesn't have all the names of the men who were made kings. Before the days of Pontus Pilate, (Roman ruler of Judea) and after his time, there were many false messiahs, prophets and those who claimed that they were holy or men of God. Although, some of these men possessed some good intentions; history and time have proven that their emotionalism, unreasonableness, lack of true justice, personal greed, and the desire for power, have led them and their followers to an untimely shameful destruction.

Part Two

The Sect of the Essenes

Who were they? Where were they located? Why aren't they mentioned in the New Testament? I shall attempt to answer these questions and more in the coming pages. I am sure that the answers to the above questions will render to you a deeper understanding of John the Baptist and Jesus.

The Roman writers, Pliny, the Elder,³⁰ (23-79 A.D.); Judaeus Philo, the Black Judean of Egypt (c.20 B.C. - c. 45 A.D.); and Flavius Josephus, the Jerusalemite, (37 A.D. - c. 99 A.D.). All three of these men wrote about the Essenes; but Josephus wrote about them more extensively. As I have mentioned previously, he said that the Essenes were the third philosophy or sect among the ancient Judeans. The main center of the Essenes was located in the Judean desert near the northwest side of the Dead Sea. This center or village was called Qumran and is about nine miles south of the City of Jericho and about four miles west of the Jordan River. Here, in the River, the Essenes would immerse themselves to obtain ritual purity. Now, at this time, let us deal with the beginning of the Essenes.

According to historical evidence, we can trace the inception of the Essenes back between 190 B.C. and 170 B.C. When the Hellenized Judean (Uncle Toms) were installed as idolatrous priest in the Temple of Jerusalem, the legitimate pious priest fled to the Judean hills for safety and more piety. The false priest received their military backing from the Greek kings of Syria. Many of the Hasidim (pious ones in the Hebrew) or Hassideans withdrew from Jerusalem and supported the rebellion of Judah Maccabee (c. 168 B.C.). This company of Essenes was led by an outstanding priest called the "Teacher of

Righteousness." The group constructed a complex of buildings on the cliffs of mountains (around caves) between En-ge-di and Jericho, Josephus writes that the Essenes lived in many towns and cities throughout Israel, some believed in marriage but the majority did not. When I was in Israel, I visited some of these areas on the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. There are many caves wherein their sacred writings were found after 1948. These writings are known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. After close examination, many scholars concluded that the scrolls and the Essenes are the foundation of John the Baptist and Christianity.³¹ This is to say that Christianity drew much of its hardware and material from the computer bank of the Judean Essenes; and below are a list of some of them commented by Josephus.

Don't Keep Servants

The Essenes don't retain servants to do their work because they believe that the possession of servants tempt men to be unjust. Christianity teaches that, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servants" (Matt. 23:11).

Wearing of Aprons

H. Graetz, the historian, relates to us that the Essenes wore an apron or towel around the waist (Graetz works, vol. II page 31). Likewise, when Jesus finished washing his disciples' feet, he took the towel wherewith he was girded and wiped their feet (John 13:5).

Four Thousand Men

It is interesting to note that Josephus estimated the population of the Essenes at four thousand men. Compare this, when Jesus fed the multitude of people that followed him; it was estimated that about four thousand men had eaten (Matt. 15:38).

Honor God and Moses

They honor God and the law giver Moses, and if anyone blaspheme them, they were punished. Jesus instructed the leper that he cured: "See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them" (Matt.8:4).

Corruptibility and Immortality

As far as the bodies are concerned, the Essenes believed that the flesh is corruptible (perishable) and temporary, but that the soul of man is immortal (it lives forever), and that the soul is derived from God via the discerning air, and is incorporated in the flesh of men, like a bird in a cage into which the souls are attracted by Divine natural force. However, when the soul is liberated at the decay (death) of the body, the soul is free and ascends up from a long captivity in the flesh. Thus, the Essenes believed in the immortality of the soul. Jesus believed also in the immortality of the soul. It is written that the Sadducees came to Jesus and said that there was a woman that married seven brothers and they all died during her life time. Now, in the resurrection, "whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had

her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." (Matt. 22:23-30).

Now, the kind of resurrection that Jesus talked about is when the soul is freed from a long captivity in the body, and the soul resurrects or rises upwards toward heaven. In this resurrection, this soul, for example, which was in Mr Williams' body, rises up to heaven. Now, this soul that rises up to heaven is only in a spirit form, and had no need to marry like terrestrial men do. When our souls rise from our earthly bodies, we no longer need earthly passions like food, water, shelter, money, nor sex. When the soul re-enters another body again, this is called reincarnation. The ancient Hebrews believed in reincarnation: Jeremiah the prophet, relates to us that the Lord said to him, "before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee..." What the Lord meant was that "before I formed thee in the belly..." He knew Jeremiah's soul and his destiny (Jeremiah 1:5). Another example: Job relates the following: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.." (Job 1:21). Job meant that he would return to the womb of his new mother in the next reincarnation of the next lifetime.

Prohibition of Swearing

Whatever an Essene says he keeps his word and they avoid swearing to confirm a matter. Now, Jesus tells us this: "Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:" (Matt. 5:34).

Rejection of Pleasure and Wealth

These Essenic Judeans repudiate pleasures and wealth as evil. When the young rich man inquired of Jesus how he could obtain eternal life, Jesus answered: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: (Matt. 19:21).

Dress In White

All of the new proselytes to the Essenic group received white garments. The apostle Matthew reports that when Jesus went up into a high mountain, he "was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as light." (Matt. 17:2).

Transactions Prohibited

The Essenes didn't engage in business, but they gave to each other whatever they wanted. When they travelled, they did not take money with them. In parallel to the above, Jesus told his disciples not to take money with them. (Matt. 10:7-13).

Acquisition of Weapons

In their instructions to the Essenes, the leadership encouraged their followers to carry weapons. Jesus' disciples received the command from him: "But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise, his script: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke. 22:36).

No Change of Apparels

Josephus informs us that the Essenes did not provide for themselves changes of clothing; nor did they permit the change of shoes or garments until they were completely worn out. Where ever they went, they expected the strangers to supply all their needs and they possessed only one garment. When Jesus instructed his disciples to go out and preach, he told them to "provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purse. Nor script for your journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who is in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it" (Matt. 10:6-14).

Marriage State De-Emphasized

The Essenes neglected wedlock on the most part; however there was another sect of Essenes who married in order to raise up children, but not for pleasure. The main body of the Essenes who didn't marry, adopted the children of others. In the New Testament, there is no evidence that Jesus or his disciples married. When Jesus was talking about eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the "kingdom of heaven sake," he seems to imply that most or some men should abstain from marriage because of religious activity (Matt. 19:12). Also, Paul seemed to discourage marriage: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain let them: for it is better to marry than to burn" (I Corinthians 7:7-9)

Communal Sharing

Again, Josephus relates to us that the Essenes despised riches and there is no one among them that have more than another. Moreover, when a newcomer join them, they must deposit their personal wealth in a common treasury for the benefit of the whole. The disciple Matthew tells us that Jesus fed four thousand men plus women and children; this was an example of communal sharing (Matt. 15:34-38). Also, when Jesus told the young rich man to sell everything he had and give to the poor, this was an example of communal sharing (Matt. 19:21). If this young man had joined Jesus, most of the multitude that followed Jesus would have been fed and clothed from the money donated by the rich man. For common sharing also read The Acts of the Apostles 2:44-46.

Therapeutic Abilities and Miracles

Josephus informs us that the Essenes were experts when it came to the treatment and curing of the sick and infirmed. In their treatments, the Essenes used prayer, meditation, laying on the hands, medicinal stones and herb roots. The Essenes were not only considered holy men, but workers of miracles. Graetz tells us that they, Essenes, preoccupied themselves with exorcism (expelling of evil spirits); and that much of this knowledge they learned from a book called *Sefer³² Refu'ot* (Book of Remedies) which was attributed to King Solomon. One method employed by the Essenes included a combination of chanting, herbs, and stones considered to contain magical powers to drive out evil spirits. It is recorded in the New Testament that Jesus cured the sick and drove out demons from various persons. Could he have

learned this knowledge from the Essenes?

Dreams and Predictions

The Essenes had a great reputation for the exact interpretation of dreams and the making of predictions. This knowledge they developed by living a life of seclusion, controlled their physical passions, prayer, meditation, strict diet, use of herbs, purification of the body (both internally and externally), metaphysics, and of the study of various subjects. Josephus mentioned a certain Essene by the name of Manahem who became an expert on dream interpretations and predictions. In fact, Herod the Great received a prediction from Manahem that he would become king when he grew up. Finally, when Herod became king, he appointed Manahem to be vice president of the Sanhedrin next to the great Hillel (c. 35 B.C.). Another Essene named Simon predicted the downfall of Archelaus, the Ethnarch of Judea (4 B.C. - 6 A.D.). Augusta Caesar appointed Archelaus then deposed him. Josephus reveals to us that the Essenes are very accurate in their interpretations and predictions.³³ The question now is did Jesus receive the few prediction he made from the Essenes?

Common Eating

Common eating became a habitual practice of the Essenic sect. They would meet together in a large dining room, quietly set themselves down and the cook served them loaves of bread in order. The cook would also bring in a single plate of one sort of food. In comparison to this, Matthew reports that Jesus served from loaves of bread, and a single sort of food. Do you know what was

the single sort of food? It was fish! (Matt. 15:34).

Aide Given When Travelling

The Essenic sect lived all over Palestine and on both sides of the Jordan River. This sect had a rule that whenever any member of that sect travelled to another city, town or village, an Essene living in that town or place was obligated to assist any Essene traveller. Take note of what Josephus says pertaining to this matter: "Nor do they either buy or sell anything to one another; but everyone of them gives what he has to him that wanteth it, and received from him again in lieu of it what may be convenient for himself; and although there be no requital made, they are fully allowed TO TAKE what they want of whomsoever they PLEASE." Compare this with Jesus sending two of his disciples to the village to TAKE an ass and a colt to ride on it (Matt. 21:1-3).

Ablution or Immersion

We learn from several sources that the Essenes became known as *Tob-le shahar*, morning-washers. They would immerse or wash themselves in pools or in the Jordan River every morning before meal. After one year, newcomers received the waters of purification. They even washed their bodies after they finished at the stool, thinking this was a form of defilement. The Essenes wanted to feel close to the presence of the Creator, as a result bathing purification became a preoccupation for them on a daily basis. Christian baptism or emersion has its foundation in the Essenic ablution or dipping in water.

Christian scholars acknowledge that the word

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Even without the information revealed by the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is a sea of evidence that indicate that Christianity derived from Essenic Judaism which we have learned from the writing of Jesephus. Many Christian scholars now believe that most of Jesus' teachings derived from the sect of the Essenes. Moreover, when we combine what Josephus says with what the Dead Sea Scrolls say, we have an extraordinary powerful case. Take notice to what Rev. Dr.Charles Potter says on this matter: "Not only Paul but Jesus himself probably fitted best into the Essenes classification among these seven groups at the beginning of his ministry, whether or not he actually joined that brotherhood as a full fledged member, he certainly advocated and preached their belief

to a remarkable extent, as every newly translated Qumran scroll reveal. He differed from them on some points, but the area of agreement was much greater.³⁷

The Community of Qumran, known as the Essenes by foreigners, called themselves the sons of Zadok and the *Keepers of the Covenant*. Zadok was the high priest during the reign of King David and the Keepers of the Covenant means simply the Keepers of the law of Moses. They held the Covenant in high esteem like their antecedents in the days of the Maccabees.³⁸ The Keepers of the Covenant³⁹ would suffer the worse torture (by the Greek-Syrians) for the sake of the Covenant, which they sometimes referred to as the New Covenant. The Essenes believed fervently in the law of Moses and when they used the term New Covenant, no doubt they meant a reaffirmation of the Covenant, as sort of renewing again.

The Judaic religion knows only one Covenant and that is the law of Moses. The term Testament means covenant, treaty or agreement. The Creator made a Covenant with the Israelites (Exodus 19:5-8) to be kept forever (Leviticus 24:8, Malachi 3:6). The vast majority of the Judeans believe in the Hebrew Scriptures and these books began with Genesis and ends with Malachi. Because Paul and the later Christians wanted to abolish the Hebrew Scriptures or the Covenant, they conceived and proclaimed the idea that the Mosaic Covenant was no longer in force, as a consequence, they claimed that the teaching of Jesus became the New Covenant or New Testament. As a result of this, they reasoned that if Jesus' teachings are the New Testament, then the Mosaic Covenant must be the Old Covenant or Old Testament. This is how the Hebrew Scripture acquired the name Old Testament. In the Hebrew Scripture, you will not find the name Old Testament, but the names, the Hebrew Scriptures or the Holy Scriptures. Furthermore, the

descendants of Judea don't attach the New Testament to their scriptures, they consider it to be Greek scriptures created by Paul and later Christian writers.

The Christian writers no doubt took the expression New Testament from the Essenes who called themselves the Keepers of the New Covenant and the Essenes undoubtedly took the expression from the book of Jeremiah: "Behold, the day comes, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." What is this new covenant spoken by Jeremiah? Does he mean that there will be a different covenant, law or testament? Jeremiah makes it clear for us in the next verse: "...But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:31-33) Now, we learn that this new covenant is one that the Israelites will not break, because, whereas; before it was written on parchment, in the future, the Lord will put the law in their hearts and they shall learn it, know it, and do it like second nature.



The Qumran Caves

In these caves the archeologist found many of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the middle cave, near the edge of the cliff, is cave 4 with two openings. Cave 5 is to the extreme left.

Part Three

Was John an Essene?

Who was John the Baptist? Is there more information about him than what we learn from the gospels? John the Baptist was killed by Herod Antipas, was he a rebel? I shall attempt to answer these questions with some detail.

According to the books of Matthew, John and Mark, John the Baptist was in the wilderness preaching. In the scriptures, we read much about the wilderness of Judah; (Judges 1:16, Joshua 16:1) and in these places it does not refer to a forest, but in other places it does. In the land of Judea where the Judeans dwelled, roughly the southern portion of ancient Israel, northeast, east and southeast of Jerusalem, is considered the wilderness, where John the Baptist preached. When I was in Israel twice previously, I travelled through this area. In Hebrew geography, the wilderness of Judea and the Jordan valley is a desolate and deserted area where water is scarce and only a few people live there. However, there are a few water holds or streams here and there. In this area in question, there are a few small rivers or streams which branch off from the Jordan River and the Dead Sea just east of the Jordan. There are three small streams that branch off from the Jordan River east of Jericho. At one of these branches called *Beth-abara*, mentioned in John 1:28, where Jesus was supposed to have been baptized. In this area on both sides of the Jordan River, and both sides of the Dead Sea, was the stronghold and center of the Essenes. It was no accident that John the Baptist and Jesus went to this area and this was the area where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Remember, the top rated scholars confirm the fact that the Essenes occupied these areas for at least a hundred

and fifty years before the birth of John and Jesus.

In the book of Matthew 3:1, it reads: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. The call for repentance is nothing new, it was articulated in Jeremiah 3:12, Ezekiel 14:6, Amos 4:10 and by the prophet Malachi in 3:7. When the Hebrew people want to use the word repent or return, the Hebrew word is *Shuva*. The idea for repent and return was the same thing among the ancient Hebrews: When they repented of their sins, this meant that they returned to God.

Kingdom of Heaven

The "Kingdom of Heaven" concept taught by John and Jesus was nothing new. Most all of the prophets stressed this point beginning with Moses⁴⁰ and ending with Malachi. It was Daniel's prophecies that had the greatest impact on the generations before and after John and Jesus. The Essenes were avid readers of Ezekiel, Isaiah, Psalms, Daniel and many other books. Daniel spoke of the four beast which came out of the sea; these beast symbolized the four successive empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome (Daniel 7:17-28). In Daniel 2:44, he informs us: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed..." Now, here in this short sentence, we have the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God which the Hebrew prophets and people read and taught long before the birth of Christianity.

Preparing The Way In the Desert

The gospel writers relates to us that it was John's mission to prepare the way of the Lord (Matt: 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4). When a team of international scholars examined the Dead Sea Scroll called the *Manual of Discipline*, they discovered that the Essenes were teaching their disciples and members that it was their duty to prepare the way of the Lord in the desert.⁴¹ For what? To prepare the Judeans to enter and take over the righteous Kingdom of God on earth.

Some of the disciples of Jesus continued this story by saying: "Then went out to him (to John) Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan and were baptized of him in the Jordan." Many scholars believe that John received his early training in the Essene schools of Qumran and that he was one of their teachers and leaders. John called the people for baptism this means to immerse themselves in water. As I have mentioned before, John became known as the *tovel*, which means the one who immerses in water, because he called the people to immersion.⁴² The historian Heinrich Graetz tells us that the Essenes "wore a sort of apron... with which to dry themselves after their frequent ablutions. In order to remove even unperceived impurities, they, like the priest before officiating in the Temple, bathed every morning in fresh spring water; and from these daily baths, they were called **Morning Baptist** or **morning bathers** (*Tob'le Shacharit*). The name Essene appears likewise to have been derived from this peculiarity, as in the Chaldean language (Aramaic) it means a bather (Aschai, pronounced Assai)."⁴³ This word became corrupted in Greek and English and we received it in its English form known to us as Essenes.

Jesus and James Were They Priests?

The gospel relates to us that Jesus had brothers and sisters. His brothers were: James, Joses, Simon, and Judas (Matt. 13:54-56, Mark 6:3, Galatians 1:19). Yes! Jesus belonged to a family like most of us and according to the gospels, his family stood by him many times. Furthermore, after the alleged ascension of Jesus, as head of the assembly, James, his brother, succeeded him as head of the assembly in Jerusalem.

The early church historians, for example, Eusebius 4th-century Bishop of Caesarea and Hegesippus,⁴⁴ a 2nd-century historian, say this about James. He alone was permitted to enter the Holy Place (the Temple Proper), for his garments were not of wool but linen... Another church historian by the name of Epphanius says that James wore the *mitre* of the high priest. If this is true, then James and his brother Jesus had to have been descendants of Aaron, the first high priest in Israel; because, according to the law, only males of the offsprings of Aaron could be a priest. Now, let us explore the scriptures to ascertain whether or not there are any basis for these arguments.

The Early Childhood of Jesus and John

There is only one gospel book that talks about the early childhood of John the Baptist at any detail and that is the book of Luke. Luke gives us more information and facts on important personalities than Matthew, Mark or John. But Matthew and Mark deals with John's adulthood only. In view of this, you would think that the book of Luke should have been placed first among the gospels. Why wasn't it? Evidently, the compilers and editors of the New Testament thought that the book of

Luke revealed too much about the family relationship of John and Jesus.

First of all, the gospels of Matthew, John, and Mark would have us to believe that when John baptized Jesus, they didn't know one other, but Luke reveals that John and Jesus are second cousins! How do we know this? We know this because Matthew says the angel appeared unto Mary, the mother of Jesus, and informed her that her cousin Elizabeth was conceived with child and she was in her sixth month (Luke 1:34-36). Mary no doubt visited Elizabeth on occasions and talked about problems and concerns as Luke informs us in 1:39-55. Also, Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months (1:56) and no doubt they talked about other family members and met other relatives. When the months and years passed by, there were most likely other family visits; undoubtedly, Mary and Elizabeth brought along John and Jesus, in addition, no doubt the young boys played together. Other scholars and I maintain that these two boys knew each other and most likely were pupils in the schools of the Essene at Qumran. Now, hold on for there is more yet to come.

The apostles Matthew, and Mark relates to us that John the Baptist frequented the wilderness and was found wearing "raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locust and wild honey" (Matt. 3:4). When you read this, most people would think that John was a low class, homeless person with no other change of clothing, and no education. However, on the contrary, Luke paints a different story about John. John's father's name was Zacharias and he was a priest in the Temple of Jerusalem burning incenses on the altar (Luke 1:5-9); this means John and his father were Sadducees by birth. With this knowledge, this elevates John to the highest social class among the religio-political circle of the Judeans. The Sadducees

ruled the nation; they were the high priest. The high priests were the heads of the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court), they controlled the supervision of the Temple and the national treasury. They made appointees to the military and political arenas. Even though, the high priests had all this power, they were puppets to the Herodian kings (Uncle Toms) for Roman interest and puppets to the Roman governors of Judea, who dethroned them at will and appointed others to their liking.

When we take a harder look at the wider scope of the evidence, it reveals that John was connected to a family of high station and that he had access to many advantages in high places. It is also evident that John was trained to play a greater role in Judean affairs than what meets the eye. Moreover, since John and Jesus are second cousins, this means that most everyone in the Temple knew each other; this really is a family affair, because the Judeans kept precise pedigree records.

Again, Luke tells us that Zacharias, the father of John, was filled with the Holy Ghost and he prophesied about the greatness of John and the salvation of Israel. Then, after the birth of John up to about his early thirties, we don't hear anything about him. He just jumps out of the cradle into manhood, and we find him preaching in the desert (Luke 1:67-80). Was John preaching his own brand of religion like Jim Jones and David Koresh or was he a student in the school of the Essenes at Qumran? We certainly have lots of evidence that points in that direction. In fact, he taught, preached, and summoned the people to baptism from all of the area around the Jordan River from Jericho to the Dead Sea. Remember, this area was the center of the Essenes. John localized himself in this region and so far, I have not seen any records that he travelled anywhere else.

When we look at one of the Dead Sea Scrolls called,

The Manual of Discipline or Community Rule found in Cave 1 at Qumran, this document convinces us that John and Jesus were probably students and teachers here at one time. I shall compare some of the teachings of John and Jesus with the teachings written in *The Manual of Discipline* which were taught by the Essenes at Qumran for more than a hundred and fifty years before Jesus.

Confessions

The Manual states as follows: "Then all those who are passing into the Covenant shall confess after them saying, 'We have committed iniquity' etc. John the Baptist and Jesus taught the people to be baptized, to repent and to confessed their sins (Matt. 3:6).

Bread and Wine

"In every place where there are ten men of the council of the community there shall not be absent from them a priest. Each according to his position, (they had rank) they shall sit before him; and thus they shall be asked for their counsel regarding anything. And when they set the table to eat, or the wine to drink the priest shall stretch out his hand first to pronounce a blessing with the first portion of the BREAD and WINE." This is what the Manual says about the community meal. In comparison to the above, Jesus had bread and wine at the last supper. This was a community meal. In addition, Jesus ate so much bread and drank so much wine on other occasions that they compared him to a glutton and wine bibber (Matt. 11:19 and Luke 7:34).

The Use of the Title "Masters"

In *The Manual of Discipline* chapter three, it frequently employs the title of masters and the masters were some of the leaders of the community. In the gospel writings, the word masters is used more than forty-five times and it appears that practically all of them refer to Jesus. To list them all would be lengthy and monotonous, so I shall just give a few references (Matt. 19:16, 26:18, Luke 6:40, and John 20:16).

One Who Takes Away A Word

The Manual continues: "Any man of the men of the community, of the Covenant of the community, who willfully takes away a word from the whole commandment shall not touch the sacred food for the holy men, he shall not know any of their counsel until his works are cleansed from all error..." Now, compare the above to what Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-19 "Who so ever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Practice of Love

In regard to the practice of love, the Manual emphasizes thus: "One shall not speak to his brother in anger or resentment, or with a stiff neck or hard heart or a wicked spirit; one shall not hate him in the folly of his heart. Each one may reprove his neighbor in truth and humility and loyal love for each one." The commandment that Jesus gave his disciples was "that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love

one another" (John 13:34).

Son of Man

The expression "son of man" or its plural is repeatedly used in the fourth chapter of the closing Psalm of the Manual. In the four gospels, Jesus uses the expression "son of man" more than sixty-five times (Matt. 8:20, Mark 2:10, Luke 5:24, and John 13:31).

The Use of the Word "Edah"

The Essene community called their community by the Hebrew word *edah* which means congregation or assembly. The disciples of Jesus used the same Hebrew word *edah* to mean assembly. This fact is confirmed by Willis Barnstone.⁴⁶ The English word "church" is a translation of the Greek word *ekklessia* meaning assembly or gathering. The scholars say the usage of the word "church" by the early followers of Jesus has nothing to do with a building, but that the word refers to an assembly or gathering of people in any given place; and the place in the apostle's time was generally a house, (see Acts 1:4, 1:13, 2:1, 2:6, and James 2:2 "For if there come unto your assembly").

Twelve Men Chosen

The Manual of Discipline says there shall be twelve men in the council of the community. These twelve became spiritual advisors to the rest of the community and this twelve was the exact number Jesus chose to assist him (Matthew 10:1).

Habakkuk Pesher

The *Habakkuk Pesher* is an interpretation of the book of *Habakkuk* in the Hebrew scripture which was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The *Habakkuk Pesher* or commentary quotes a text and then continues to explain it. In the book of *Habakkuk* 2:4, the reading is as follows: "But the righteous shall live by their faith." In substance, the *Habakkuk commentary*⁴⁷ explains that "the righteous shall live by their faith," that is, faith in the law and performing it. James, the brother of Jesus, supports this interpretation when he said: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture. Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." James, who supports the law, although there are obvious insertions in his works that speaks to the contrary, and who no doubt was an Essene (living in Jerusalem) opposed Paul on the question of faith (for faith sake) and supported the interpretation of the *Habakkuk Commentary* that was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Now, this brings us back to the point of John preaching in the wilderness. In *The Manual Of Discipline*, the Essene leaders taught their followers to keep separated from outsiders and "prepare the way of the Lord;⁴⁸ make straight in the desert a highway for our God." This is exactly what Jesus and John learned from the Essenes.⁴⁹ According to what we have learned about the Essenes from Josephus and the Dead Sea Scroll, John and Jesus didn't have many original teachings of their own, but derived many of their teachings from their ancestors and particularly, the Essenes.

Many renown scholars, whether they be Jewish, Protestant or Catholic, believe that there exist many contradictions, insertions, and mis-interpretations in the

gospel writings. Some of these scholars are as follows: Hyam Maccoby, Joel Carmichael, Charles Guegnebert, the Rev. Dr. Charles F. Potter, John Jackson and many others.⁵⁰ In view of this fact, it has not been easy to unravel the maze of confusion in the gospels. It requires an open-mind, dedication and wide research to figure out the facts, and fit the pieces together.

Since the scholars have discovered that what John, the Baptist and Jesus taught was not Christianity, but Essenism, what was their true mission? In view of the fact that the Romans and their puppets, the priests and the Herodeans controlled the politics, the Essenes and John preached repentance, initiation of baptism and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Repentance meant this: to decide to do what is right according to the law, treat your brother with justice, to have mercy, speak the truth and walk humbly before your Creator. To the Essenes and John, this was a requirement to prepare the way of the Lord and to prepare the Judeans for the Kingdom of Heaven, which they thought would take place soon. The Essenes, John and Jesus believed that the Kingdom of Heaven meant a righteous Kingdom of Israelites on earth who are subject to the laws of God. They also believed that this kingdom would not be dominated by the corrupt priesthood, the Herodian flunkies, nor the Roman masters.

It is evident, that John became the popular leader of the Essenes or a splinter faction of them. Matthew 3:5 informs us that multitudes of people from Jerusalem, Judea, and all the regions of the Jordan came to him to be baptized, that is, to be immersed in water as an initiation ritual into his mass movement. Eventually, Jesus came to John to be initiated into his movement by baptism. If this is not the case, why did Jesus come to John in the first place? John became the chief kingpin of his movement and had thousands of people following

him before Jesus commenced his ministry. By the way, Jesus didn't start his ministry until after the arrest of John the Baptist.⁵¹ Moreover, when Jesus heard of the arrest of John, Jesus immediately fled from Judea and escaped to Galilee (Matt. 4:12). Because Jesus had joined John's movement, he had sense enough not to hang around and be subject to arrest.

In spite of the fact that the gospels built up Jesus above John, the fact remains that John had the people and the program. Jesus imitated John. After John's death, Jesus preached what John preached. John preached repentance and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (Matt. 3:2). Jesus immediately preached the same thing (Matt. 4:17). The people considered John a prophet. It is evident that Jesus was a student and member of John's movement and Jesus thought a lot of his second cousin John. In Matthew 11:3, Jesus said the following: "But what went ye out to see? A prophet? yea, I say to you, and more than a prophet...Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist..." Now, the next point leads us to ask why was John really executed.

We learned earlier that Jesus and John were cousins. Why is this fact played down in the gospel writings? Secondly, John baptized Jesus in or near the Jordan River. In light of this, and since they were cousins,⁵² why do they behave as though they never saw each other before? The gospel writings play down the family relationship between John and Jesus for these obvious reasons:

1. It would give Jesus a broader family and earthly connections.
2. It would make us highly suspicious that Jesus is a descendant of the priestly families.

3. If we ascribe unto Jesus a priestly birth connection, this would discredit and weaken the genealogical family tree listed in Matthew 1-16, which claims that Jesus is a descendant of the tribe of Judah.
4. If we conclude that Jesus is a descendant of the priesthood in Jerusalem; therefore, an heir to the throne of the high priesthood, then, Jesus would have a good reason to try to take over the rulership of the Temple and the nation. With this reasoning, Jesus would be a great danger to the pagan Roman authorities and to King Herod. I shall address this issue more thoroughly later.

The Real Reason Why John Was Executed

(Historical Background)

After the banishment of Archelaus, (the son of Herod the Great, and ruler of Judea) Augusta Caesar placed the province of Judea under direct Roman domination in 6 B.C. Judea, at this time, had no civil king or ruler. The first Roman procurator or governor was Coponius. During his rulership, several days before Passover, some Samaritans (none Judeans) stole their way into the Temple and scattered some bones among the pillars of the cloisters in the outer court of the Temple hoping to defile it. As a result, the Judean denied the Samaritan's entrance to the outer court. Not long after this event, Coponius was recalled and replaced by Marcus Ambivius, then Marcus was succeeded by Annias Rufus. There were three procurators in the short time of seven years, what an unfortunate situation because each of them were intent on bleeding the wealth of the nation. When

Augusta died in A.D. 14, Tiberius succeeded him as emperor of Rome in the same year. Not long after the coronation of Tiberius, he appointed Valerius Gratus to be procurator of Judea. Immediately upon the arrival of Gratus into Judea, he became involved in the suppression of constant rebellion among the people; he had heard about a messiah who would establish a kingdom ruled by Judeans. He, no doubt, thought that there would be no messianic kingdom while he was the civil and military authority. Josephus, the Judean historian, relates to us that Gratus, during his rulership, removed four high priests from office and appointed four different ones successively.⁵³ The last high priest that Gratus appointed to office before he departed from Judea was Joseph Caiaphas. Caiaphas⁵⁴ was still in office when the new procurator, Pontius Pilate arrived in 26 A.D. At this time, John and Jesus comes into our story and, no doubt, they were very familiar with most of the events in Judea. As soon as Pontius Pilate arrived in Jerusalem, he stirred up the anger of the Judeans by violating the Judean law. He marched his legions into the city carrying Caesar's image on their standards! The people objected by a large protest demonstration, and said that they were ready to die rather than see Judean law violated. During the imperial period, the emperors were worshipped as gods, and the Roman troops made sacrifices to their images. Now, since you have some background information about this period of Pontius Pilate, I shall return to the reason why John the Baptist was executed by Herod Antipas.

The gospels relate to us that Herod Antipas, the tetrarch (ruler) of Galilee and Perea arrested John because he criticized him for marrying his niece, the wife of his brother.⁵⁵ Some scholars doubt that this was the main reason why he was executed. Josephus informs us: "Now, when (many) others came in crowds about him (to

John), for they were really moved (or pleased) by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion,(for they seemed ready to do anything he advised) thought, by putting him to death to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent (regret) of it when it should be too late."⁵⁶

I wouldn't deny the argument that Herod put John to death because of his criticism; moreover, Herod's wife helped to influence his decision. Considering the prevailing mood in Judea at that time, the public speeches against the corrupt priesthood, speeches against the Herodeans (the flunkies of Rome) and speeches against Roman OPPRESSION, it is highly likely that John and Jesus spoke out against the corrupt system of the all-pervasive Roman domination like Judah the Galilean rebel had done. In those days, there was a union of church and state (or religion and state), and you couldn't be a bonafide leader or man of God without speaking out against internal corruption and foreign military occupation.

Zacharias, the father of John, spoke out about the enemies of the Judean people. In the book of Luke 1:67-80, Luke claims that "Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people. And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham. That he would grant unto us, that we being

delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear." Zacharias considered the enemies to be the Romans and their Judean Uncle Toms.

I fervently believe John was executed because he spoke out against Herodean and Roman domination. Zacharias was an important priest in the Temple and he and his son John, no doubt, were eligible to become elevated to the priesthood if they could effectuate a successful *coup de tat* against the corrupted priests and the unwelcome Romans. When John and his disciple Jesus were teaching, repent for "the Kingdom of God is at hand"; what they were really saying in the Hebrew language, and concept, was return back to the Covenant of Abraham and Israel; because the present kingdom of earthly rule and Roman control will be terminated and a new Kingdom of Heaven will be instituted in Jerusalem. This new "Kingdom of Heaven" or "Kingdom of God" on earth is called by these terms, because the rule of God, who is thought of as residing in heaven, will govern this kingdom with his law. In view of this, what we have here is a replacement of the old wicked kingdom of Roman influence in Judea with the establishment of a righteous kingdom in Judea without Roman military occupation or influence. It is because of this concept of the "Kingdom of God", that Herod executed John, and Pontius Pilate executed Jesus. In Roman eyes, any teaching of another kingdom in Judea to substitute the rule of the Roman Caesars meant only one thing, REBELLION. Rebellion was considered a high crime against the Roman empire and the punishment was death by crucifixion. The historian Josephus recorded that the Romans crucified thousands of Judeans before and after the birth of Jesus.⁵⁷

Many scholars⁵⁸ recognized the fact that the gospels can't be relied upon for accuracy. There are only some facts scattered here and there; as a result, we must refer

to other historical records, other Hebrew books, weigh one disciple's word against another, isolate and identify the contradictions, decide what was omitted and what was inserted, and reach a conclusion as to the underlying motives for the distortion of the facts. I have tried to use this process of elimination in order to reach my conclusions. The research is like a detective trying to solve a murder case among a bunch of lying celebrities.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD

- 1) Graetz Heinrich, *History of the Jesus* vol. I Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1891, p. 456.
- 2) The Greek leaders from Syria declared that the law of the Hebrew Scriptures were abolished, done away with; and no doubt Paul of the New Testament, (a Hellenized Jew) who speaks against the law (Gal. 2:16; Roman 3:28) was tremendously influenced by Hellenism and Gnosticism which was existing in the then known Greek world.
- 3) *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus Flavius Book XVIII, chapter I, section 2 and 6.
- 4) Graetz's works, vol. II p. 66.
- 5) Deut. 17:14-20; I Sam 9:16, 8:20, 8:22, Isaiah 9:7. Here, the prophet Isaiah is referring to King Hezekiah who will establish his kingdom with judgment and justice. This means under the law of God. Moreover read: Jeremiah 23:5 and Genesis 49:10. The kings were the offsprings of the tribe of Judah. "The kingdom shall be the Lord's (Obadiah 1:21). In the days of the messiah, God will set up a kingdom Daniel 2:44-45. The Code of Maimonides, Yale Judaica Series, vol. III. Book XIV, the Book of Judges. Hershman A. pp 204-242.
- 6) Ibid. p. 240. For more information on the fighting messiah, read Numbers 24:17-19.
- 7) When the following prophesies will be fulfilled, then the Judean messiah will be on the scene: Num. 24:17-19, Amos 9:11-15; Isaiah 2:1-4, 11:1-16; Obadiah 1:15; Zechariah 8:20-23, 9:8-17, 12:1-14:1-19; Melachi 4:1-6; Ezekiel 37:16-28, 39:1-29; Daniel 2:44, 7:13-17.
- 8) Graetz's works, vol. II p.p. 86,87,89,105,107,127.
- 9) Mark and Luke speaks of the Kingdom of God. Mark 1:15; Luke 4:43. In II Maccabees 7:11, the tortured boy uses heaven to refer to God (see Apocrypha).
- 10) Josephus Flavius, *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book IX, chapter 9. See also Graetz's works; vol. II.
- 11) See Graetz's works, vol. II p.p. 73 & 74.
- 12) A talent weighed about 10.2 of a pound.
- 13) Read Acts 5:37, Luke 23:5, "He stirreth up the people..." means he incites the people, hence trouble maker. Jesus committed a riotous act in the Temple (John 2:13-14) Remember, Jesus was a Galilean. The Galileans committed many fanatical acts against the Herodian family, and against the oppressive Romans; also, they were the victims of violence by the Romans, see Luke 13:1-1; See Josephus, *Antiquities* Book XX, chapter V, section 2.
- 14) Cassius Longinus was one of the conspirators that assassinated Julius Caesar in the senate of Rome in 44 B.C.
- 15) Graetz's works, vol. II p. 80.

- 16) Josephus' works, *Antiquities*, Book XIV, Chapter IX.
- 17) Ibid. Book XIV, Chapter XV, section 2.
- 18) Graetz's works, vol. II, p. 89.
- 19) Josephus' works, *Antiquities*; Book XVII.
- 20) The Feast of Weeks is called by Christians Pentecost and had nothing to do with the speaking in tongues. The Greek word Pentecost means the fiftieth day, because the Feast of Weeks is celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover by Judeans until this day (see Exodus 32:22, 23:14-16; Leviticus 23:15-16). It is a feast that Judeans give thanks to God for the first fruits and crops of the land. It also commemorates the giving of the ten commandments to Moses, a second time, in the third month which took place about fifty days after Passover.
- 21) See Josephus' works, *Antiquities*; Book XVII, chapter X, section 10. Crucifixion was the usual punishment for capital crimes such as murder, treason and rebellion against the Roman state. Crucifixion was practiced by the Romans for more than a hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ. It was used by several ancient pagan nations such as the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians.

In the motion picture called "Spartacus" the Roman first Consul Crassus crucified hundreds of rebels. The crucifixions took place c. 71 B.C. (see Webster's Geographical dictionary; check the word "Spartacus." Also, to get a good idea of Roman life, rent the video "Spartacus" from your local video store. The crucifix or cross had no religious meaning among the

ancient Judeans, but it was a symbol of a condemned criminal; just as the hangman rope and the electric chair are symbols of a condemned man today.

- 22) The Roman procurators were appointed by the emperors to supervise the financial affairs of a conquered province. They possessed judicial and military authority like Pontius Pilate.
- 23) Archelaus was the son of Herod the Great and was appointed ethnarch (ruler) of Judea, Samaria and Edom (Idumaea) in the year 2 B.C. by Augusta Caesar. Because he was very cruel to his subjects, he was deposed by the Romans and exiled to Vienna in Gaul. (France)
- 24) This new system of taxation is hinted at in the New Testament Luke 2:1-5; Matthew 22:15-17 and Acts 5:37.
- 25) Simon known as Peter and Cephas, he was one of the first disciples of Jesus (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). A Zealot means a person of great zeal and in Judean history, a zealot means a militant or fanatic. Practically all Galileans were fanatics, and Judean history confirms that most of Jesus' disciples were Galileans and he told them to buy swords (Luke 2:36).
- 26) See Josephus' works, *Antiquities*; Book XVII chapter 1, section 6.
- 27) Not only did the Judeans pay all the Roman taxes, but they had their Israelite taxes to pay called the tithes. The Judeans had to pay a tithe to the priest,

pay a tithe to the poor and had to set a tithe aside to defray their expenses when they travelled to Jerusalem on the three obligatory feast holidays; these three holidays were Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the Feast of the Tabernacles.

- 28) See Josephus' works, *Antiquities*, Book XVII, chapter X, section 5.
- 29) Ibid. Book XVII, chapter X, section 8.
- 30) Rev. Dr. Charles F. Potter, *The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed*, p.36. On this page, Pliny uses the word, "Hessenes" which is the same as Essenes. There are some who believe that the word Hessenes is derived from the Hebrew word Hassidim which means saints or pious ones. I shall comment more on this matter shortly.
- 31) Baigent Michael and Leigh, Richard; *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, p. 46-47.
- 32) Graetz's works, *History of the Jews*, p. 29.
- 33) Josephus' works, *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book XV, chapter X, section 5. Also, refer to Book XVII, chapter XIII, section 3.
- 34) The mountain of Masada is situated near the south western shores of the Dead Sea. Herod fortified this mountain, constructed palaces, store houses, barracks, living quarters and pools. The archaeologists discovered also a synagogue there. For detailed information read: Josephus' works, *Wars of the Jews*; Book VII, chapter VIII, and "Masada" by Yigael Yadin. When my brother Cole,

my friend Maurice E. Kennedy, Sr. and I toured Israel in 1991, we visited Masada and saw many of the excavations revealed there.

- 35) The word "Talmud" mean study; this book is a compendium of Judaic culture including Hebrew customs, traditions, history, architecture of the Jerusalem Temple and the interpretation of Judaic law of every category. The ancient rabbis of Babylon and Persia began to write down the traditions and explanation of the Torah (Judaic laws) beginning around 500 B.C. and they completed this written work about 450 A.D. As you can determine, the Talmud is the product of many generations of rabbinical scholars. Before the compilation of the Talmud, the ancient knowledge of the Judeans was transmitted orally; however, due to the dispersal of the Judean people among the nation, the rabbis feared that Judaic traditions and explanations of the Torah would become lost. The end result was that the rabbis wrote down the wisdom and knowledge for succeeding generations of Judeans.

The Hebrew scripture is called the written law and the Talmud is called the oral law because it explains the written law. The explanations were done orally, mouth to mouth. Moses received the written law of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai and the rest of the laws Moses received orally. This means God spoke to Moses face to face. Moreover, anything that Moses did not understand he inquired and asked of God and God spoke to him the explanation. The ancient rabbis maintained that Moses received the written and oral law at the same time. When Moses did not understand a point on the law of inherence, he inquired of the Creator and

he received an explanation in regards to the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 27:1-7) Whereas, it is written, "and the Lord spake all these words saying" (Exodus 25:1) Moses received the oral law, (the explanation) first. The oral law was given to Moses first; how do we know this? Thus it is written: "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face" (Exodus 33:11). Therefore, Moses heard the law first and received it orally. After Moses received the law orally, and understood its meaning, oral explanation from God, Moses told and explained the laws to the people of Israel (Exodus 24:3). Then at last, Moses wrote down the laws of the Creator (Exodus 24:3). For further explanation on the oral law, read *The Mishna* of the Talmud," *The Code of Maimonides* by Jacob J. Rabinowitz.

- 36) Josephus' works, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XVII, chapter 1; and *Wars Of The Jews*, Book II, chapter VIII. also, read Graetz's works. *History Of The Jews*, vol. II, pp 24-31.
- 37) *The Lost Years Of Jesus* pp. 12 and 25.
- 38) II Maccabees 7:1-42.
- 39) I Maccabees 2:20, 2:27, 2:50. *The Mystery Of The Dead Sea Scrolls* by John Allegro, pp. 110 and 120.
- 40) Exodus 10:6.
- 41) *The Other Bible* by "Willis Barnstone, pp 209 and 217.
- 42) II Kings 5:10 and 5:14.

- 43) Graetz's works, vol. II, p.26.
- 44) *The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, p. 191.
- 45) Matthew 10:1-6.
- 46) *The Other Bible*, p. 209.
- 47) Baigent's works, *Dead Sea Scrolls Deception*, p. 197.
- 48) Barnstone's works, *The Other Bible*, p. 209 and 217.
- 49) Matthew 3:3 and Mark 1:2-3.
- 50) To obtain the names of the books written by these scholars, refer to the bibliography at the back of this book.
- 51) Matthew 4:12 and 4:17.
- 52) Luke 1:30-63.
- 53) Generally, the Romans deposed a high priest if they felt that the priest was not looking out for Roman interest.
- 54) Josephus' works, *Antiquities Of The Jews*, Book XVIII, chapter 11, section 2.
- 55) Matthew 14:1-12.
- 56) Josephus' works, *Antiquities Of The Jews*, Book XVIII, section 5.

57) Ibid. Book XVII, section 10. For anyone who wants to be informed more about Roman life, government, the military, and crucifixions. I recommend that you rent the video call Spartacus. Spartacus was a Black rebel who led his army against the Roman empire around 73 B.C.

58) Listed here are the names of some of the broad spectrum of scholars who believe that the gospels have been tampered with: Rev. Dr. Charles F. Potter, *The Lost Years of Jesus* pp 9, 12, 16, 25, 18, 95, 155. Professor Charles Guignebert, *The Christ*, pp. 20, 32, 33. John Jackson, *Christianity Before Christ*, pp. 43, 113-114, 207, 209. Ian Wilson, *Jesus: The Evidence*, pp. 54, 55.

CHAPTER II

REVEALING THE REAL JESUS

Part One

The Duel Personality Of The Gospel Jesus

The Jesus of the New Testament seems to possess the personality of more than one person. I shall explore this approach in order to see if we can obtain some understanding of this probability. The gospel writers seem to have combined several personalities into one; as a result, there are many contradictions which are too numerous for this book. However, I shall explain some of the most important ones.

Jesus' Views on Family

The two Jesuses that I see in the gospel writings are the Judean Jesus and the fictitious Jesus created by Paul (who never met Jesus) and some gentiles. The Judean Jesus taught: "Honour thy father and thy mother: and thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 19:19 and Exodus 20:21). When Jesus' mother met him at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, she said to Jesus: "They have no wine". Jesus said unto her, "Woman, what have I to do with thee" (John 2:1-4)? For anybody to address his or her mother as woman, is highly disrespectful, and to follow it up with the question: "What have I to do with thee?" is even worse.

In another incident, Jesus was meeting with his disciples and his mother and four brothers came to talk with him. Then, Jesus answered the messenger and said

unto him: "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren (Matt.12:46-50)!" Here again, the fictitious Jesus is disrespectful. In these verses, Jesus implied that his family wasn't religious. I don't believe this, but even if they were not, this is no reason for him to ignore and disrespect his brothers and mother. Even if his family didn't believe in him, he would not win them over by being despiteful.

Son of Man vs Son of God

In the gospels, various persons refer to the fictitious Jesus as the son of God, many of these persons are irreputable, evil and are associated with groups that wouldn't know in the first place (read Matt. 8:29, 27:40, 27:54; Mark 3:11, and Luke 4:41). Although some gospel writers said that an angel, and other people refer to Jesus as the son of God, (Luke 1:35) this opinion is in the minority. Based upon what the Judean Jesus said of himself many, many times, I believe that the "son of God" phrases are insertions.

The Judean Jesus used the phrase "son of man," frequently, and this phrase is used also in the Dead Sea Scrolls among the Essenes (see part 2 of this work). The book of Daniel used the phrase once (8:17). The Psalms use the phrase, "son of man" five times, and the phrase, "sons of men" seven times.¹ No doubt, Jesus was a great admirer of Ezekiel,² because Jesus used the phrase "son of man" about seventy times in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In Hebrew Scriptures, the books from Genesis to Malachi, there is no concept of a special son of God. This is why the Judean Jesus called himself the son of man. The Hebrew Scripture teaches that the nation of Israel is God's son (Exodus 4:23-23, II Samuel

7:14) and this is only because the Creator made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (later called Israel). In a broader sense, all nations are God's sons, because He created all humanity.

Virgin Birth vs Natural One

The concept of virgin births was nothing new in the ancient world among the various nations. Among the ancient Hebrews, the idea was unthinkable and was not taught in the Torah or law of Moses. Since virgin birth was not taught and was not in the psyche of the ancient Hebrew, this is something that they could never accept. It was relatively easy for the pagan nations to accept the virgin birth of Paul's Jesus because they had virgin birth stories of their own.³ Paul's churches among the gentiles taught about the virgin birth stories and other innovations, changed much of the original history, created a new book called the New Testament, and attached it to the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) in order to give it validity and authority. As of 45 A.D., only the Hebrew Scripture was in circulation. The leaders of the Hebrew assembly in Jerusalem headed by James, the brother of Jesus, didn't believe in the virgin birth.⁴ The New Testament, as we have it today, has been so badly mutilated by the forgery of the editors that it can't even be depended on for forty percent accuracy. This is the fictitious Jesus.

Now, the Judean Jesus was like the rest of the Judeans and his people. Matthew tells us: "when he (Jesus) was come into his own country (province) he taught them in their synagogue, in so much that they were astonished, and said Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenters son? is not his mother called Mary? and his

brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters are they not all with us" (Matt. 13:54-56)? The Judean Jesus had a father as everyone else and the Judean law and prophets never mentioned about virgin births.⁵

Sabbath Observance

The fictitious Jesus did not prepare for the Sabbath before it ushers in; he and his disciples picked corn on the Sabbath. Then, when he was questioned about his violation of the Sabbath; he retorted by saying King David ate the shewbread when he was not suppose to eat it. This is like the fictitious Jesus saying, David violated the law, so I can do the same thing. Finally, Jesus said, "For the son of man is the Lord even of the sabbath day" (Matt. 12:1-8). The expression "Lord even of the Sabbath day," means that he can abrogate the law of the Sabbath according to his free will. The statements here as quoted by the fictitious Jesus, many scholars consider them to be insertions by later editors.

The Judean Jesus kept the laws and the Sabbath: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as HIS CUSTOM was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read" (Luke 4:16). Here, we find that it was the custom of the Judean Jesus to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath day and to be called up to read the law as most Judeans do today.

No Human Sacrifice

The fictitious Jesus believed in human sacrifice, and the Christians teach that Jesus willfully went to Jerusalem

to submit himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Jesus expounded this: "so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). According to Matthew 27:60, the body of Jesus was placed in a tomb or sepulchre. A tomb or sepulchre is an encasement made of large stones and it looks like a small house. In view of this, Joseph of Arimathea never buried the body of Jesus under six feet of earth. What we have here is Matthew contradicting himself, and this is very prevalent in the gospels. Now, back to human sacrifice. Many of the ancient pagan nations sacrificed human beings to their idol gods; this was extremely immoral, and for this reason, the Creator permitted the Israelites to sacrifice only animals.

In contrast, the Judean Jesus believed in keeping the law. Any Judean law keeper would never entertain the idea that he had to die for the sins of the world. The Judean Jesus didn't want to die and these are his words, "O my Father, if it BE POSSIBLE, let this cup (agony) pass from me..." (Matt. 26:39-44). These words proved that Jesus wanted fervently to escape his ordeal. His human soul poured forth profound grief, with inner emotions anticipating and hoping for some other way out of his dire problem. Matthew states that he said this: "not as I will but as thou will." Are these his words or are they insertions by the later editors? Matthew relates to us that Jesus prayed three separate times to be delivered from his predicament. This does not read like a man that wants to suffer for the sins of the world. The opposite appears to be true, that is, he wanted an out, he did not want to die for the sins of the world. Now, is there any more supplementary evidence that would indicate that the Judean Jesus didn't want to die for the world? With all this tampering with the facts, the editors of Matthew, unconsciously, permitted another clue to remain! After the Romans crucified Jesus on the cross,

the final event came and his expected deliverance had not come, he reached total despair and hopelessness and exclaimed these words: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Matt. 27:46). Here is another place, we find that the Judean Jesus expected deliverance from death. Now, this is a very important piece of evidence to demonstrate that the Judean Jesus never, never intended to die on the cross. In addition, by his own words, since he didn't intent to die, then we can logically maintain that he had no intentions to die for the "sins of the world." Therefore, the dying for the "sins of the world" is the teachings of the fictitious Jesus combined into one corpus of the gospels. Now, this conclusion motivates me to ask one question. If the Judean Jesus didn't intent to die for the world, what was his game plan or purpose? As the brothers and sisters would ask in street jargon, what was he about? or then, what was his true mission? Hold on, I shall answer your questions shortly in another section.

The Position of Jesus On Jurisprudence

The fictitious Jesus undermines the law. How so? John recorded that when Jesus came into the Temple, he sat down and taught the people; then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman to him who was caught in the very act of adultery. They said to him: "Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned, but what sayest thou?" The fictitious Jesus answered in this manner: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:1-7). By answering this way, he subverts and undermines the law indirectly and insidiously. I shall give you an example of what I mean. Let's suppose that a vicious murderer is on trial for raping and killing a young girl and his lawyer turns

toward the jury and says to them: "any of you who are without sin, let him or her have no mercy on the accused". Now, most people have committed some kind of sin, misdemeanor, or crime of one kind or another; however, if we operated our court system the way the fictitious Jesus handled the case of the adulterous woman, we would have a society in complete state of anarchy. Why? Because all the criminals would be back on the streets.

The Judean Jesus is direct and to the point when it came to the law; in fact, he talks like a Pharisee: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," (Matt.5:17-19). The word "fulfill" means to put into effect, to convert into reality and to perform. Jesus continues, "Whosoever, therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men, he shall be called the least in the "Kingdom of Heaven;" but, whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the "Kingdom of Heaven."

Again, the Judean Jesus or true Jesus was like all devout Judeans, he loved the Creator and he loved God's laws. Hear his response to a question. What is the first of the commandments? "Hear O Israel the Lord our God is one Lord." God is not two persons or two entities, nor a trinity. It is the fictitious Jesus that is a trinity. The Judean Jesus continues with details: "And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself..." (Mark 12:29-31) The last quote about the one God and "thou shall love thy neighbor..." Jesus quoted this from Deuteronomy 6:4-5. During the lifetime of Jesus and his disciples, the only sacred books that existed among the Judeans were the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament had not been

written. For additional proof on this Judean Jesus, read (Matthew 19:16-19; 5:23-24).

The Passover and the Last Supper

In the writings of the gospels, the fictitious Jesus transformed the Hebrew Passover into the Last Supper. It was the law and custom for all males to travel to Jerusalem to celebrate the three feast (holidays) and they were: the Feast of Booths, the Feast of Weeks, and the Passover. The gospels reveal that Jesus observed the Passover many times in Jerusalem (John 2:13). At Jesus' last Passover, before his crucifixion, the fictitious Jesus sat down to eat the Passover with the disciples. Jesus blessed the bread, broke it in pieces and distributed some to the twelve disciples and he said the following: "Take, eat; this is my body"⁶ (Matt. 26:26). By this statement, the fictitious Jesus changed the meaning of the Passover. According to Hebrew law, only unleavened bread is permitted to eat during the seven days of commemoration. Furthermore, the reason and the meaning for eating unleavened bread is that the ancient Hebrews didn't have enough time to prepare the bread with all the ingredients such as salt and yeast. The Passover meal and ritual is performed to remember the liberation of the ancient Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, (Exodus 12:1-28).

After Jesus served the bread, he passed around the cup of wine and commented thus: "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many." The fictitious Jesus now referred to the red wine as his blood. This is a radical change from the original meaning of the blood of the lamb. In observance of the law of Moses, the ancient Israelites in Africa (Egypt) killed a lamb and sprinkled the blood on the two side posts and the upper door post of their houses as they were commanded.

Then, when the Creator saw the blood, he passed over the houses of the Hebrews and didn't allow the destroying angel to smite them.

The Judean Jesus and his family kept the Passover according to the law of God, and the lamb and the meal was eaten only in Jerusalem and many lambs were slaughtered in the Temple for every Israelite. Luke records that the household of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover: "Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year to the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast, (Luke 2:41-42). Now, the custom of the feast was that every male head of a household and his sons were required to bring and slaughter a lamb at the Temple in Jerusalem. The priests took the fat of the lamb and burned it on the altar and sprinkled its blood at its side; then at evening, the person who slaughtered his lamb, took it to his quarters and roasted it."⁷ This is what the Judean Jesus and his disciples did before they sat down and ate the Passover meal: "And the first day of Unleavened bread, when they killed (slaughtered the lamb) the Passover, his disciples said unto him, where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover" (Mark 14:12). This proves that Jesus and his disciples intended to keep their Hebrew Passover in Jerusalem.

World Savior or Judean Nationalist

By the writings of the three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the fictitious Jesus commanded his disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15, Matt. 28:19, Luke 24:27).

We have different instruction from the Judean Jesus. Jesus, who is called Joshua in the Hebrew language,

called his disciples unto him and commanded them: "Go NOT into the way of the GENTILES, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." The Samaritans were gentiles who lived in the central part of the land of Israel whom the king of Assyria transplanted from Babylon and Assyria. The Samaritans always gave the Judeans a lot of trouble. Now, where did Jesus tell his disciples to go? He instructed them to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The 'Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'. Jesus was a Judean nationalist. Moreover, there is no doubt, in the view point of many scholars, what Jesus had in mind; because Judea was under the military occupation of the Roman legions.

The Kingdom of God Transformed

During the early and middle period of the teaching ministry of the Judean Jesus, he taught that the "Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," and Jesus and the people understood this to mean in their lifetime. However, toward the latter period of his life, the fictitious Jesus taught that his kingdom was not of this world.... but now is my kingdom not from hence (John 18:36). The previous sentence seem to be the distortions and insertions of a later editor.

Now, this is a STRANGE contradiction because John the Baptist and the Judean Jesus taught that the "Kingdom of Heaven" is at hand; and this is what his disciples believed, as I shall demonstrate. First of all, most Judeans waited eagerly for the coming of the messianic kingdom, because Herod and his sons were the illegal heirs, and the Romans interfered in the politico-religious affairs of the nation. The Judean Jesus intended to establish himself as king, regardless of what

some contrary opinion says. The word "kingdom" simply means a king's domain or dominion. Jesus taught about the "Kingdom of God" and he established the apparatus for a religio-political organization. Can I evince any proof for this? Yes! Jesus set up twelve disciples for his cabinet or advisory board (Matt. 10:1). Then, he chose seventy additional men (Luke 10:1); for those who know Hebrew history, I am convinced this word "seventy" rings a bell in your ears. The seventy⁸ or Sanhedrin, as it is called in Greek, was the legislature and supreme court of the Judean nation and it was functioning during the lifetime of Jesus and Pontius Pilate. In fact, it functioned in the Chamber of the Hewn Stone in the Temple Complex. Was this by accident that Jesus selected **twelve** and then **seventy**? Was Jesus making preparations for his coronation as king? Whatever credibility we can attribute to him, Matthew tells us that some wise men came from the East to Jerusalem asking this: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews" (Matt. 2:1-6). Was Jesus making preparations to establish his kingship in Jerusalem? The evidence certainly points in that direction and he did preach that the "Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Was he preaching the advent of his own kingdom?

It is obvious to me that Herod the illegal ruler (the way Matthew tell us) thought that Jesus was born to be king because Herod sought to kill him in infancy. Furthermore, we learn from Josephus that Herod and his descendants exterminated many of the heirs of the Maccabee kings to keep them from ascending to the throne of Judea.⁹

There are three kinds of kingdoms of God in the New Testament: 1. The "Kingdom of God" which is in heaven or outer space. This is generally the place where human souls ascend after the death of the body. 2. This "Kingdom of Heaven" is within; here the individual

repents of his sins, decides to do right and when he is confronted with the same temptations, he refuses to repeat the same sin and this "Kingdom of Heaven" leads to inner peace. 3. This is the "Kingdom of God" on earth; this kingdom comes into existence when there is accumulated a number of people large enough to form a government ruled by the laws of the Creator which leads to righteousness. When enough people possess the "Kingdom of God" that is within, this automatically evolves into the "Kingdom of God" on earth. In view of this, I believe that this is what Jesus the Judean was attempting to do. Jesus was attracting a number of people in order to prepare for the establishment of his kingdom. He even taught his disciples a prayer and part of it reads: "Thy KINGDOM come. Thy will be done in EARTH, as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:9). There is no doubt in my mind that the Judean Jesus intended and initiated strategies for the establishment of a government under the slogan known as the "Kingdom of God." Jesus was the leader of a multitude of people and according to Josephus, this was dangerous business in the eyesight of the Herodeans and the Romans. As a result, Jesus became a national fugitive and was on the run most of his life (Luke 9:58) like any revolutionist would be. There is one more potent clue that proves that the Judean Jesus believed that the "Kingdom of God" would occur during his and his listener's lifetime: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste death, till they see the son of man coming in (into) his kingdom" (Matt. 16:28). Basically, what Jesus meant was that many of you who are alive with me now will still be alive when I march into Jerusalem to take over my kingdom.

Epilogue

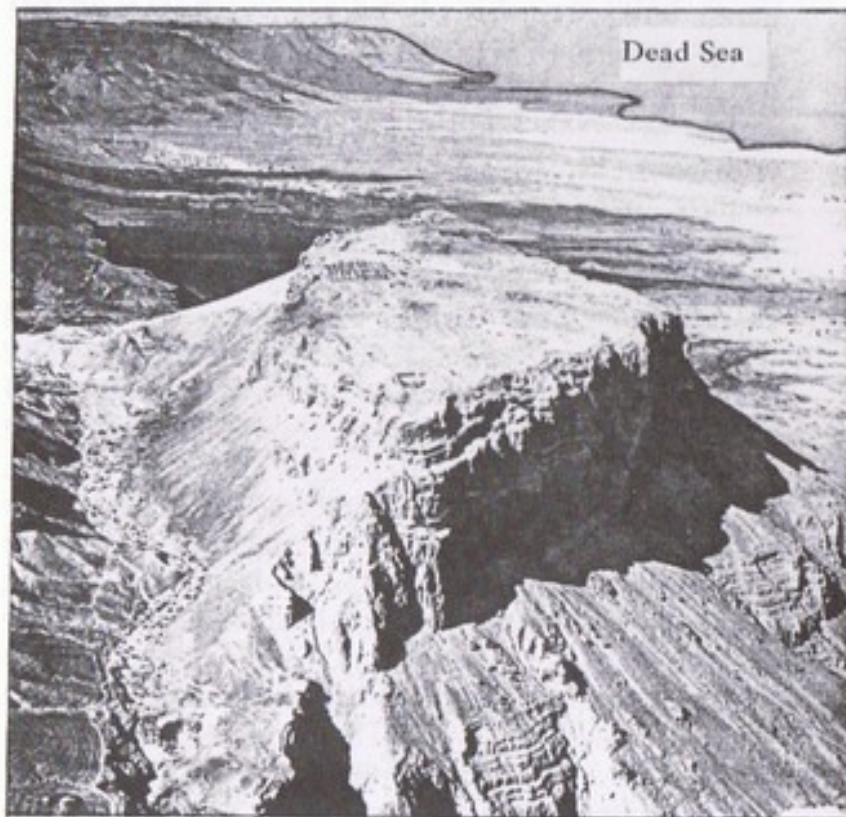
There are many more points that I could show you regarding the dual personality of the gospel Jesus, but the time does not permit it for this writing. In closing out the core of this subject, I shall say that it is impossible to obtain most of the facts from the New Testament because it is based on interpolations, contradictions, mythology, paganism, and deliberate omissions. The editors of the gospels combined all of these ingredients into one package and called it the New Testament, really, it should be called the new confusion. Moreover, they justify it by telling us to have faith, and just believe. The gospel writings lack much historicity, this means that it does not harmonize with the Hebrew Scriptures, world history, nor with Hebrew history. To arrive at the near truth, one has to take a piece of information found at one place in the gospels and compare it with another piece of information in another remote place. After this has been accomplished, the next step would be to compare this information with other various facts found external to the gospel writing. Sometimes the researchers will discover some contradictions, forgeries or omissions; if this be the case, the researcher should try to ascertain the motive for the contradictions, forgeries, omissions or coverups. This is the approach that I have tried to employ in the compilation of this book.

The dual personality of Jesus that we find in the gospel writings reminds me of several motion pictures. One was *The Three Faces of Eve*. In this picture, based on a true story, three personalities occupied the body of a woman at various times. At one time, she was Eve White, then she transformed into Eve Black, then at another time she became the third personality which I can't remember at the moment. When one personality

did something wrong, she would deny that she did it and would blame the other personality for it.

Then there was the motion picture called *Psycho*; and the main character was played by Anthony Perkins. This picture was typical of the dual personality. When Anthony Perkins was himself, he behaved in a mild manner, talking softly and looking innocent. On the other hand, when he took on the personality of his mother and dressed in her clothes, Anthony became a raving maniac killing suddenly without warning. Finally, the police arrested him; and as he sat in his cell, a fly flew on his hand. Then he thought and said, "I am not even going to kill it, I'll show them that I couldn't even hurt a fly." Just as Anthony Perkins displayed two separate personalities in one person, the gospel Jesus also displayed two distinct separate personalities in one body. This is the way it is because the editors wanted it that way in order to deceive the masses.

I believe that if my readers are aware that two personalities of Jesus exist in the gospels, you will better understand the contradictions and the weak foundation that exist in the gospels. In addition, you will understand more so what I shall write in the coming pages.



Aerial view of the mountain of Masada where almost 1,000 Judeans. Zealots, held out for three years against the Roman legions headed by General Silva.

The Judeans finally committed suicide rather than be captured and sold into slavery by the Romans (*Wars of the Jews*: Josephus F. Book VII, chapter 8). Also, rent the video called *Masada*.

Part Two

The Priestly Ancestry of the "Jesus Scroll"

The Fifteenth Scroll known as the Jesus Scroll was found by Professor Max Grosset on top of the mountain fortress of Masada. The word Masada is derived from the Hebrew word *Mizudah* which means fortress. The author of the book entitled, *The Jesus Scroll* claimed that he met Professor Grosset at Lod Airport in 1964. While he was in Israel, Donovan Joyce, the author of this book, relates to us that Professor Grosset offered him five thousand dollars to smuggle a scroll parchment out of the country. In addition, Professor Grosset claimed that he was a member of an international team of archaeologists and scholars doing excavation on top of Masada under the leadership of the famous Israeli archeologist Yigael Yadin; he maintained that the Israeli Department of Antiquities sponsored this project. Before the discovery of the *Jesus Scroll*, Grosset claimed that the team found previously, fourteen various scrolls, but he did not turn in the fifteenth one. In another secret meeting that sounded like an espionage operation, Joyce relates that the professor revealed that Max Grosset wasn't his real name, and that he was keeping it confidential for security reasons.

The professor disclosed some of the most important contents, said Mr. Joyce. This scroll was written the night of the 14th of April in the year 73 A.D. by an old man who identified himself as Yeshua Ben Ya'akov Ben Gennesareth and the last of the rightful heirs of the Hasmonean (Maccabean) kings of Israel. Moreover, he wrote that he was eighty years old. This book is excellent reading and I recommend it to anyone who is interested. The meaning of the name of the old man who wrote the *Jesus Scroll* is "Jesus the son of Jacob, a son of

Gennesareth." Gennesareth was the name of a town and fertile plain on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee,¹⁰ and the meaning of the word is "garden of the prince or scion." Many of the offsprings of the Hasmonean families lived in this town and area. There are many important facts and points that I could bring out; however, again, time and space does not permit it at this writing. Moreover, just because Jeshua Ben Jacob says that he is the son of Jacob and not Joseph, this does not necessarily make his story unbelievable, because Joseph is not the father in the first place. Matthew and the rest of the gospel writers claim that the holy ghost is Jesus' father. Since Jeshua Ben Jacob wrote his own autobiography, he should have known his father more so than anybody. My reason for introducing Jesus of the *Jesus Scroll* is to point out his claim that he is a descendant of the kings of the Hasmonean family (Maccabees) and that the Hasmonean high priests called themselves kings from the reign of Judah Aristobulus (104 B.C.).¹¹ In addition, we do have historical proof and evidence from the gospel writings that indicate that the second cousins, John and Jesus, were descendants of the priestly tribe of the Levites and not descendants of the tribe of Judah.¹²

The Herod Extermination Policy

Herod the Great, the king of Judea, should have been labeled Herod the notorious one because he executed a relentless cruel policy of the extermination of the Hasmonean king-priest dynasty. Furthermore, he disregarded the sensitivities of the Judean people and violated the laws of the Creator. Below is a list of atrocities and abuses committed by Herod after the Roman Senate appointed him king in 40 B.C.

1. Herod convinced Mark Anthony to send Roman legions to install him in power.
2. He usurped the throne from King Antigonus, the legal Hasmonean heir to the throne of Judea.
3. In retaliation against five cities which supported King Antigonus, he destroyed those cities and burned two thousand of its inhabitants, alive.
4. When Herod invaded Jerusalem, he slaughtered many people who were in his path, regardless of age or sex.
5. At the time that Herod invaded the city, Herod gave orders to his commander to kill all the people who were fleeing.
6. Herod murdered about seventy of the judges of the Great Sanhedrin and seized their property for his royal treasury.
7. He passed over the offsprings of the Hasmonean priest dynasty and appointed Ananel, the Babylonian to be priest.

8. Herod the Edomite, claimed he was the descendant of an old Judean family from Babylon, he said this to try to conceal the fact the he was an Edomite.
9. Aristobulus III, another heir to the Hasmonean dynasty was murdered by Herod.
10. Herod murdered two of his sons and the husband of his sister Salome.
11. After he married the beautiful Hasmonean princess Mariamne, Herod placed her under house arrest when he visited abroad. Herod did this because he knew she didn't love him, she didn't love him because; she knew that he murdered many of her relatives.
12. Herod placed his mother-in-law, Alexandra in confinement.
13. He received four hundred Gauls of French descent, as personal body guards, given to him by Augustus Caesar.
14. Herod ordered the priest in Jerusalem to offer up sacrifices for the caesars of Rome.
15. Fearing opposition, Herod murdered the ex-Hasmonean priest, King Hycanus II, grandfather to Mariamne.
16. He murdered his wife, Mariamne, the Hasmonean princess, because she would not return his love.
17. Herod took political power from the Great Sanhedrin.



This is a photo of an Ethiopian Judean lady in Israel. The author met many of them when he was in the Holy Land. No doubt Mariamne, the wife of Herod, looked something like her.

17. Herod took political power from the Great Sanhedrin.
18. In veneration to Augustus, Herod erected two images in the Holy Land, Augustus as the Olympian Jupiter and the other is that of the City of Rome as the Argive Juno.
19. Herod established the City of Caesarea as the capitol of the Roman government in Judea.
20. He taxed the citizens heavily.
21. The Judeans who were in prison for stealing, he sold into slavery.
22. He imposed an additional tax on the Pharisees who would not take an oath of allegiance to him.
23. Herod organized and employed a large spy network to watch his subjects, and sometimes he would disguise himself and appear in crowds, as a result of this spying, God help the soul who was caught speaking against the king.
24. Because Herod lacked sensitivity for the Divine laws of Moses, he erected a golden eagle over the main entrance of the Temple.
25. Herod executed his sons.
26. Because Herod could not gain the love of the Judeans, he constructed amphitheaters and arenas in Caesarea and Jerusalem to gain the affections of the Greeks and Romans. In these arenas, naked men fought wild beasts and other men to the death,

disregarding the Judean Divine law against murder and nudity; this he did all in the name of sports and for the honor of Augustus Caesar.

27. Herod continually cemented his close friendship with the Romans by offering them gifts and large sums of money. Herod knew that if he continued to be a good sycophant for the Romans, he could always count on their political and military support should the Judeans rebel.
28. He fortified a number of fortresses to have places to flee for protection in case the Judeans would rebel against him. Some of these fortresses were Alexandrium, Herodium, Masada and Macherus. Also, Herod erected a fortress around his palace in the Upper City of Jerusalem.

After the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C., Augustus Caesar placed Judea under direct Roman domination and when all Roman procurators came to Jerusalem, they used Herod's palace as their headquarters.

29. Among the multitude of people who opposed Herod and the Romans were two Pharisees and teachers of the law, Judah Ben Zippori and Matthias Ben Margalit, these teachers encouraged forty of their students to tear down the golden eagle over the main gate of the Temple. Herod swiftly, dispatched his soldiers to the scene and arrested them and sentenced all of them to death by hanging.
30. Herod constantly thought about murder. Here is what Professor Graetz says about him: "He insisted upon the most respected men of Judea being

brought to Jericho, and imprisoned them in the great public arena, where they were closely guarded; he then left orders with his sister Salome and her husband that directly after his death had taken place, they should be all massacred by his body guards, so that the entire nation might be mourning their love ones, and no one would have the heart to rejoice over his demise."¹³

31. The two sons of the beautiful Hasmonean queen, Mariamne, were beheaded by Herod. The victims were: Alexander and Aristobulus. They were beheaded in the same place where their mother was married.
32. Herod divided up his kingdom among three of his sons: to Archelaus, he bequeathed Samaria and Judea, with the title of sovereign; to Herod Antipas, he gave Galilee and Perea; to Herod Philip, he bequeath Batanea, Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, and Pania. As far as the Hasmoneans were concerned, the rightful heirs to the kingdom, Herod left them out completely. As a result of this, distant relatives of the Hasmoneans plotted for the day when they would throw out the Uncle Tom priests in Jerusalem, take power from the Herodeans and be victorious over the oppressive Romans.

The Rulers of Judea 37 B.C. - 73 A.D.

King Herod the Great
Archelaus (Tetrach)

37 B.C. - 4 B.C.
4 B.C. - 6 A.D.

PROCURATORS

Sabinus (unofficial procurator)	(c. 3 B.C. - ?)
Coponius	6 - 9 A.D.
Marcus Ambivius	9 - 12
Annius Rufus	13 - 15
Valerius Gratus	15 - 26
Pontius Pilate	26 - 36
Marcellus	36 - 37
Marullus	37 - 41

KING

Herod Agrippa	41 - 44
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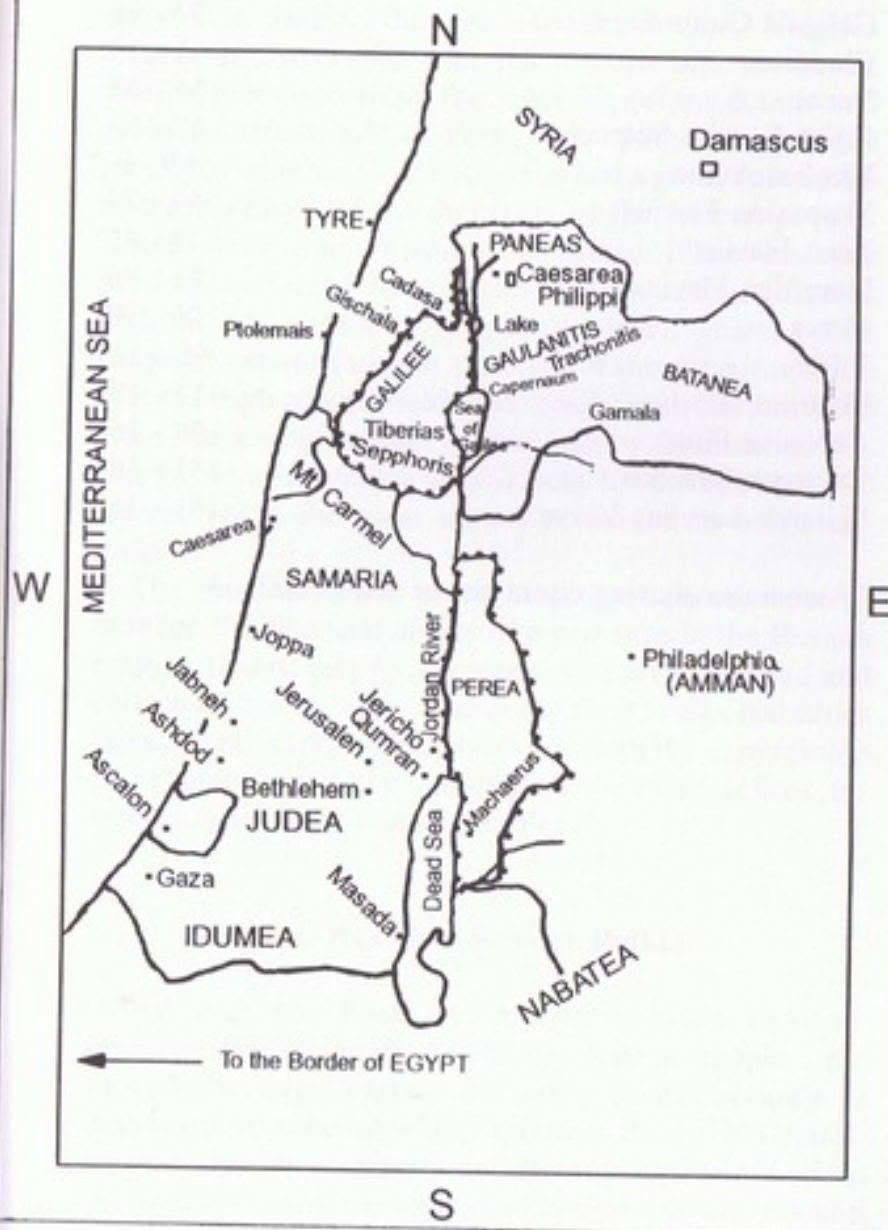
PROCURATORS

Cuspius Fadus	44 - 47 A.D.
Tiberius Julius Alexander	47 - 48
Ventidius Cumanus	48 - 52
Antonius Felix	52 - 59
Porcius Festus	60 - 62
Albinus	62 - 65
Gessius Florus	65 - 66

The Judean War	66 - 70
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Lucilius Bassus	70 - ?
Silva	70 - ?

Borders of the Provinces of Judea Ruled by The Sons of Herod



EMPERORS OF ROME

Gaius Octavius Augusta	27 B.C. - 14 A.D.
Tiberius Claudius Caesar	14 - 37
Caligula Gaius Caesar	37 - 41
Claudius	41 - 54
Nero	54 - 68
Galba Servius Sulpecius	68 - 69
Vitellius Aulus	69 -
Vespasian Flavius	69 - 79
Titus Flavius	79 - 81
Domitian Flavius	81 - 96
Nerva	96 - 98
Trajan	98 - 117
Hadrian	117 - 138
Antonius Pius	138 - 161
*Marcus Aurelius	161 - 180
*Lucius Aurelius Verus	161 - 169

*Associates sharing equal power simultaneously

Pontius Pilate

In the year 26 A.D., Emperor Tiberius appointed Pontius Pilate as procurator of Judea. When Pilate arrived in Judea, the previous procurator, Valerius Gratus, received him with full honors; and no doubt, briefed him concerning the most important details and problems that would confront him. After ruling Judea for eighty-nine years, the Romans had a good knowledge of the country and the mentality of the Judean people. There were four procurators before Pilate and his predecessor Gratus removed and appointed four different high priests within a period of eleven years. The frequent removal usually occurred if the procurator felt that the high priest couldn't be easily controlled or if he wasn't receiving enough bribery money from the priest. The priest who became a good lackey for the Romans and offered them the most money remained in office the longest.¹⁴

The mission of the procurators (governors) were to manage the financial affairs of a province in the Roman empire, that is, they took a census whenever directed and collected taxes. In addition, their responsibilities included military and judicial duties with the suppression of rebellions and the handing down of sentences for crimes against the Roman empire.

Pilate: Was He a Softy or Ruthless?

Not long after Pilate had arrived in Judea, he came into direct confrontation with the Judean people. He moved the large part of his army from Caesarea to Jerusalem to take up winter quarters there. No doubt, he did this to reinforce the Roman garrison and to prepare to control the several million people who flocked

into the city due to the Feast of Tabernacle. During the times of the three Feasts, riots and insurrections were very common. The Roman army marched into Jerusalem under the cover of darkness bearing Caesar's images on their standards. Josephus records that this practice had not been done by previous procurators; and when the people learned of this, they assembled in a large crowd (massive demonstration) to protest the bringing of the images which is prohibited according to Judean law. After this matter ensued for many days, Pilate came out into the plaza on the sixth day, and ordered his soldiers to surround the protesters and informed them; that if they didn't terminate the demonstration, they would suffer immediate death. The Judeans exposed their necks on the ground and said that they would rather die than to have their laws violated. Thereby, Pilate became greatly affected by their firm resolution, he henceforth removed the images. You won that round, no doubt Pilate thought, but I shall be ready for you the next time.

The next time came when a would-be messiah or prophet arose among the Samaritans and persuaded a large number of his people to accompany him to Mount Gerizzim. He claimed that Moses deposited there some holy vessels and he assured them that he would show them the location. When Pilate learned of this gathering of the multitude, he gathered his army, prevented the people from going to the mountain and killed many of the people including the leaders.¹⁵

This action of Pilate and the actions of other procurators, reveal that the Romans had their flunkies and spies in various places. In those days, the Romans were very suspicious of anyone who considered himself a king, messiah, prophet, the son of God, a religious reformer, magician, rabble-rouser or just any person that assembled a crowd around him. The Romans had a good reason to be suspicious and paranoid because they

were the foreigners, the oppressors, and they interfered in the political, economic and religious affairs of the Judean state, they were persona-non-grata, unwelcomed.

Was Jesus a Rebel Leader?

Considering the prevailing political and military situation during the life of Jeshua or Jesus, it is not improbable that he could have been a rebel leader. Yes, there was a lot of violence in the nation, as well as many political parties and factions. The Judeans felt that the Hebrew prophesies were about to be fulfilled. Many would-be messiahs and prophets came and disappeared. The people were angry and disgusted at the oppression of the Herodians, some of the high priests were corrupt and fell into the orbit of Rome; and the display of the oppressive might of the Romans became visible everywhere. When Pilate came to Jerusalem from Caesarea, he marched his flamboyant legions through the streets of the city with their trumpets blowing and their drums beating. The palace of Herod in the upper city became his command post. The Roman procurators retained one cohort (500 soldiers) within the fortress of Antonia, just northwest of the outer court of the Holy Temple. Moreover, during feast days, when the Romans expected riots and rebellions, they would station one or more cohort of troops in the cloisters which surround the outer court of the Temple Plaza. Josephus informs us that it was during the procuratorship of Ventidius Cumanus,¹⁶ in which he stationed a large contingent of troops in the western cloisters (between a series of columns with arches) in full battle dress. On the occasion of the feast of Passover, one of the soldiers pulled down his breeches and exposed his private parts to the multitude, and the people became enraged. Because of the riot and

stampede that ensued, over twenty thousand Judeans lost their lives. What should have been a rejoicing Passover was changed into a state of mourning.

In view of this condition of affairs in Judea, any true leader of his people couldn't help but be a rebel against the social political order. This meant to organize and take power away from the corrupt religious political officials and the oppressive Romans, and to establish the "Kingdom of God," a righteous kingdom.

Many men emerged and failed, Josephus wrote. Could Jesus of Galilee be classed among this mold of men? The Roman historian, Conilius Tacitus, wrote in the first century that the early Romans regarded Jesus as a minor political rebel who was crucified under Tiberius by the procurator Pontius Pilate.¹⁷ When we are aware of the historical background of this period, we are strongly motivated to take a very close look at the gospel Jesus with a very fine comb.

The next question is, can we discover any small clues in the gospels that would indicate that Jesus was a rebel? I must inform you again, don't expect to find all facts in the gospels; what you will find is some facts interwoven between the fabric of falsehood and it requires the assistance of the historical detective to unravel the confusion. I fervently believe that if we keep Jesus within his **historical context**, we can find the real personality of the man, but when we extract him from his historical settings, he becomes a figure from another world; something like an astronaut without his enterprise spaceship.

Jesus a Judean Nationalist Leader

In this section, it is my aim to identify the Judean or real Jesus as opposed to the mythical or un-natural one.

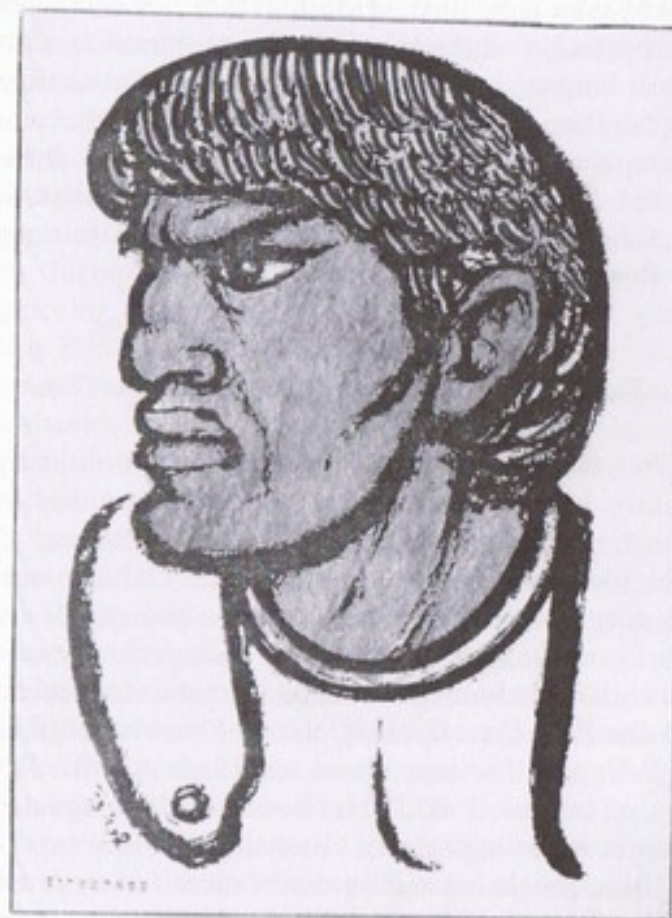
The real Jesus who fought against the Romans believed in Hebrew nationalism. He specifically told his twelve disciples: "Go NOT into the way of the **Gentiles**, and into any of the cities of the Samaritans (non Judeans residing in central Palestine) enter ye not. But go rather to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel**" (Matt. 10:5-6). The above statement of Jesus is predated with nationalism. The Webster dictionary defines nationalism as "loyalty and devotion to your nation; possessing a sense of national consciousness and exalting the nation above all others, and placing primary emphasis on the promotion of its culture and interest." This definition of nationalism describes the real Jesus to a tee. At another place, Jesus said, *salvation is of the Jews* (John 4:22). No doubt, Jesus, being a Judean, adopted this saying from Zechariah 9:23 and 9:9. After Jesus told his disciples to go to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel**, in the next verse he instructed his disciples, "go preach saying the: Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." As I have shown, the "Kingdom of Heaven" is the righteous "Kingdom of God," which the Essenes, John and Jesus, intended to establish in Jerusalem. It is obvious that the phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" became a slogan of national liberation to rally the Judean people against **Roman colonialism**. This line of logic keeps Jesus within his historical context.

Again, at another verse in the same chapter, Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a **sword**" (Matt. 10:34). Here, it is crystal clear that the real Jesus taught his Judean disciples that he came to rally the people and raise a sword against the Roman invaders. Listen how the thirty-eighth verse flows and harmonizes well with the above verse: "And he that takes not his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me." When Jesus said, "And he that taketh not his cross," he is not talking about carrying a cross as a revered religious symbol as Christians do

today, because when Jesus lived, the cross was not held as a religious symbol by Jesus nor his disciples. This was a later development. Among the Romans, the cross was a device employed to punish and execute criminals for high crimes against the Roman empire; this was called crucifixion. Many pagan nations used crucifixion hundreds of years before the crucifixion of Jesus and historical records indicate that the Romans adopted this practice from the Carthaginians. In fact, the Romans crucified two thousand Judean rebels who revolted against the army of the Roman general Sabinus at Jerusalem. This horrendous event took place during the reign of Archelaus (4 B.C. - 6 A.D.). Moreover, when the Romans wanted to crucify a criminal, they made him carry his cross to the place of crucifixion. This was Roman custom. As the real Jesus was travelling around Judea and Galilee, he was recruiting followers for the war against the Romans. Now, here is a clue in another place: "If any man will come after me (be my followers), let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Over the centuries, the true translation has been changed somewhat. In this verse, what Jesus was really saying to his disciples and new recruits was this: If you want to join my revolution against the Romans, then be prepared to sacrifice your life for the struggle, because if you are ever caught by the Romans, you will have to carry your cross to the place of crucifixion. This is keeping Jesus **within his historical context**. Now, the aforementioned information prompts me to ask a rhetorical question: Is the cross a religious symbol?

The various clues from different parts of the gospel indicate that the real Jesus progressed and moved up from one stage of rebellion to another. As time passed, he became more and more militant in his battle to establish the "Kingdom of God" in Jerusalem, and this is

This picture was taken from the book: Spartacus by Hurad Fast. It was printed in Hebrew. Tel Aviv, 1954.



Spartacus

This African rebel leader led a slave revolt against the Roman empire. After killing many Romans, Spartacus and his men were captured and crucified by the Roman Praetor, Licinius Crassus in 71 B.C.

no more than what Moses, Joshua and the Maccabean brothers did. Before the crucifixion of Jesus, his nationalist movement, no doubt, had violent confrontations with the army of Herod and the Romans. Read what Jesus said about his movement called the "Kingdom of Heaven," "and from the days of John the Baptist until now, the 'Kingdom of Heaven' suffers violence and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12). Now, this is the interpretation of the scholars who are familiar with the Greek language and history. They say that the clause, "the violent take it by force" means that the men of action, the militants or violent ones such as John the Baptist, Jesus and their disciples are taking violent action to take the "Kingdom of God" by force of arms against the Romans.¹⁸

The Galilean Political Faction In Jesus' Time

The Galileans became a powerful, political, and military faction in northern Palestine, Josephus called them the **fourth philosophy** among the Judeans. They were always extremely militant and Galilee was the breeding ground for these rebels sometimes called Sicarii and zealots. For three or four generations, their descendants led constant rebellions against the Herodians and the Romans. Ezekias, the Galilean rebelled about 47 B.C and his son Judas rebelled against Roman taxation about 3 B.C. His sons rebelled against the Romans including John of Gischala of Galilee in 66 A.D. All these rebels led multitudes of men; for more details of what I have written, consult the headings in chapter I entitled: "Judas The Galilean," and "The Rise of The Freedom Fighters."

Like most Galileans, Jesus and eleven of his disciples were Galileans¹⁹ (Matt. 4:17) except Judas Iscariot; some

scholars say *Iscariot* (means man of the dagger). The Sicarii were extreme zealots and militants. Most of the disciples of Jesus were probably zealots and the disciple "Simon called zealots" was definitely one. Even during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, the Galileans stand out as the chief insurrectionists against the Romans. Luke relates to us that: "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices" (Luke 13:1). The phrase "at that season" can only refer to the Passover. When we understand Judean law and customs, this verse becomes very clear. It was at the season of the Passover that every Hebrew male was permitted to kill his lamb sacrifice at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.²⁰ It was during this time as hundreds of Galileans were slaughtering their lambs, a riot or rebellion took place. Pontius Pilate called up his Roman legion to suppress this riot, resulting in the death of many Galileans. Cataclysmically, the blood of the Galileans became mingled with the blood of their slaughtered lamb sacrifices.

Furthermore, what we have here in this thirteenth chapter of Luke is evidence that the followers of Jesus were keeping him very well informed about all events happening in Palestine and Jerusalem. Because the men who Pilate killed were Galileans like himself, Jesus was especially concerned about the massacre; and with the report of this event, Jesus became completely aware of the cruel nature of Pilate. Then, Jesus answered the men who reported the massacre: "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Jesus told them that the victims were no more sinners than any other Galileans. "Apparently, by the above clause, Jesus meant, if you don't repent and join my revolution all of

you will perish by the hand of the Romans. Regarding this incident, Jesus doesn't even condemn Pilate for his crime, why?

Historical sources and the gospel writings demonstrate that Pilate was no boy scout or pussycat. In another incident he took the *Korban*, holy money from the Temple treasury,²¹ and used it for the construction of an additional irrigation system. This behavior displayed disrespect for the high priest, the Temple, and for the Judean people. In view of this, many ten thousands of Judeans assembled in a clamorous protest against Pilate. He ordered the people to disband the demonstration; and when they refused, he gave the signal to his soldiers to attack the protesters. Thousands of men were slaughtered that day and the suppression put an end to this sedition.

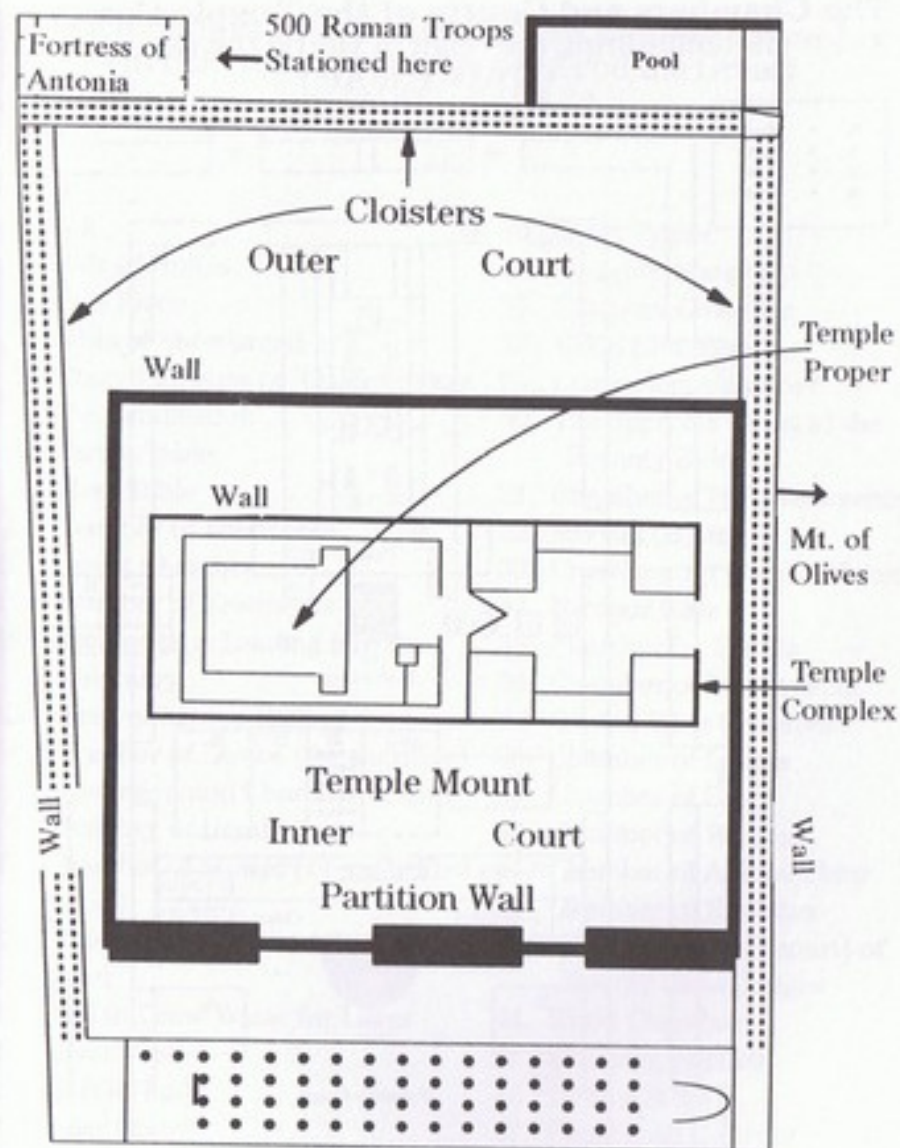
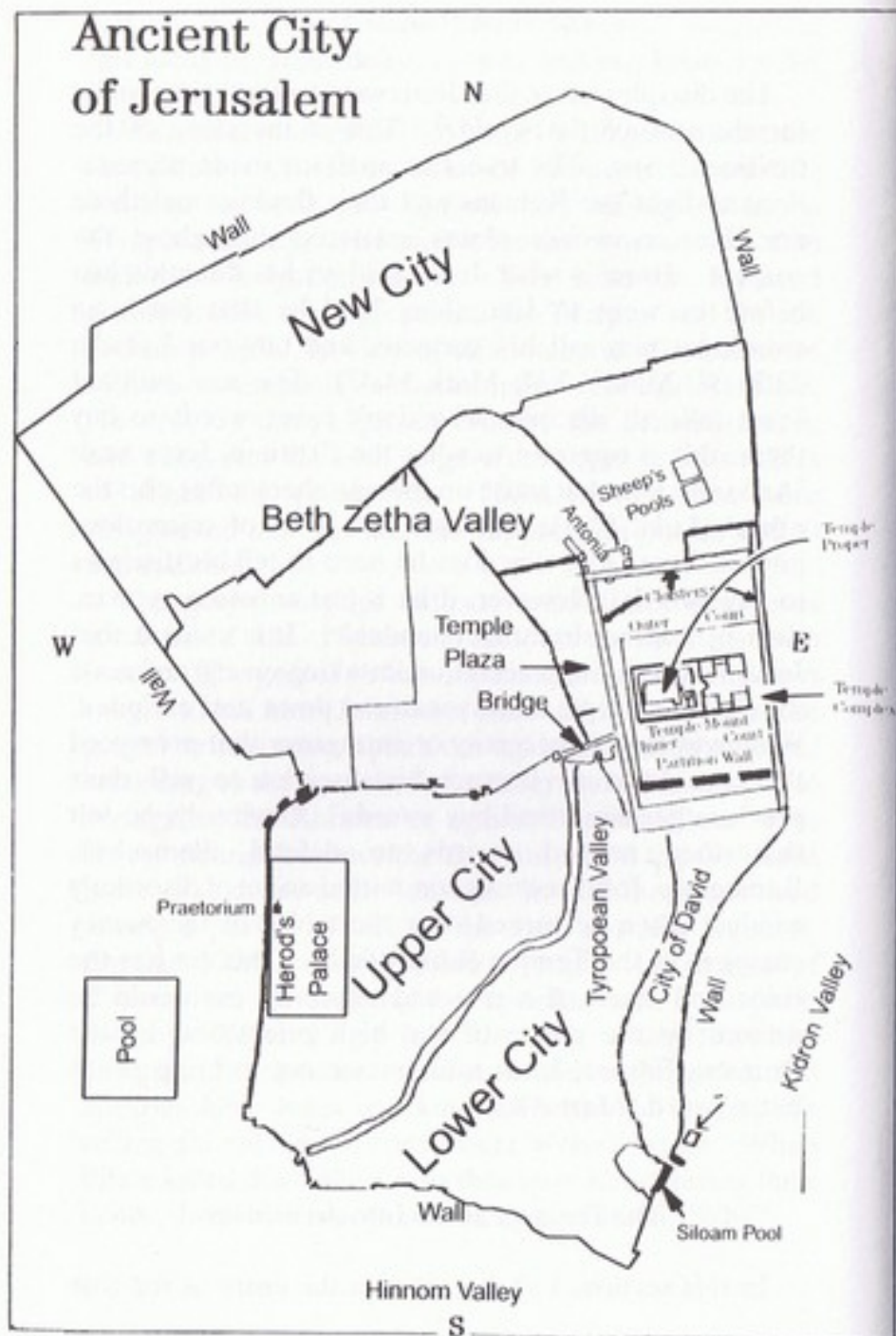
The gospel writings indicate many times that Jesus condemned the Pharisees, Sadducees, and his own people. The gospel writers say many times that the Jews sought to kill him (John 5:18, Matt. 15:1, 23:13); but the gospel writers never speak out against the Romans, and according to the gospels, Jesus never had a harsh word to say against the Romans or against Pontius Pilate. This is **very strange** because the Romans hated the Galileans more so than any other Judeans. In addition, Jesus lived during a period of one of the most ruthless Romans, Pontius Pilate. When Pilate brought the images of Caesar into Jerusalem, the apostles and Jesus said nothing. When Pilate took the holy money from the Temple, the apostles and Jesus said nothing; but the apostles have Jesus speaking out when the priests are selling animals in the outer court of the Temple. When Pilate killed the Galileans as they were slaughtering their lambs, Jesus did not speak out against Pilate, Why?

The Final Plan of Jesus

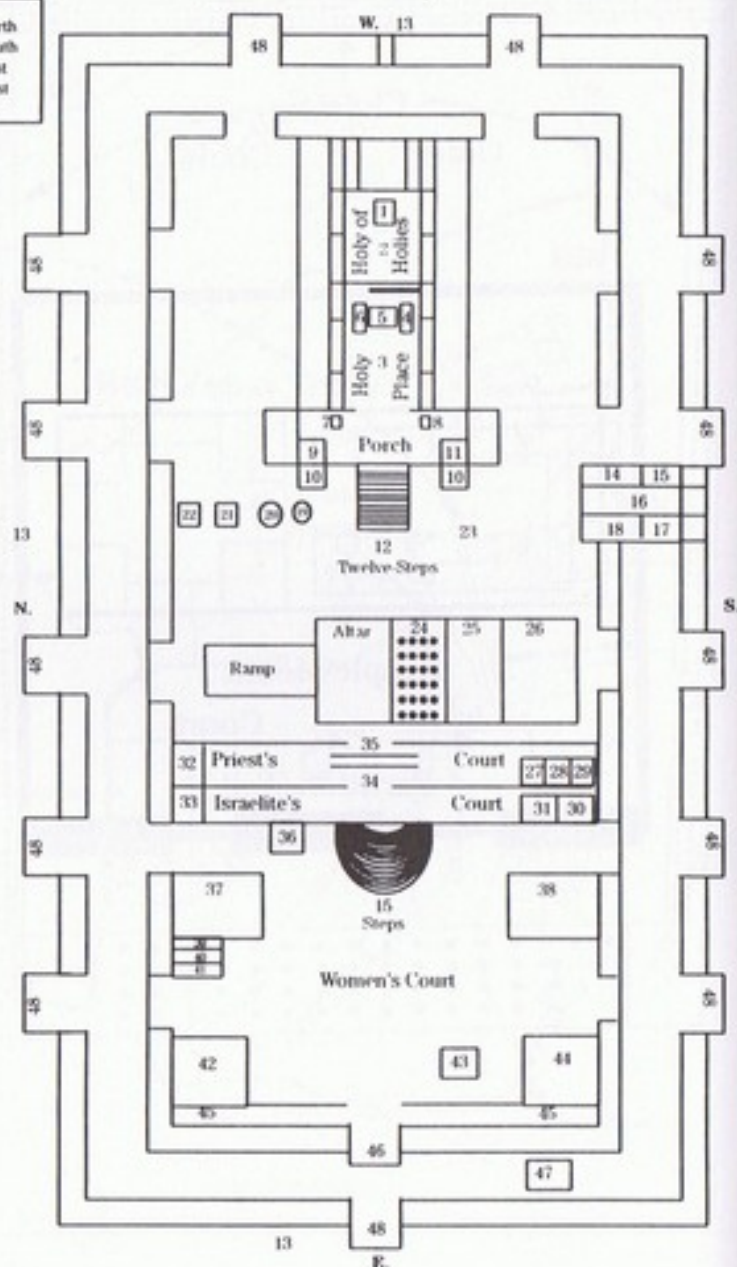
The disciples wrote that Jesus went to Jerusalem to die for the sins of the world.²² This is the story of the fictitious Jesus. The true Judean Jesus made preparations to fight the Romans and their flunkies and there are clues in various places scattered throughout the gospels. Here is what Jesus said to his disciples just before he went to Jerusalem: "and he that **hasth no sword**, let him **sell his garment**, and buy one." (Luke 22:36-38, Matt. 10:34, Mark 14:47) The true militant Jesus tells his disciples who don't have swords to buy them; this is opposite to what the fictitious Jesus said: "And unto him that smite on the one cheek offer also the other" (Luke 6:29). If Jesus has a lot of miraculous powers from God, why does he need to tell his disciples to buy swords. However, if he is just an ordinary man, then it is somewhat understandable. It is evident that Jesus was planning a secret undertaking on a grand scale which, later gospel editors watered down and excluded. What was the big necessity or emergency that prompted the true Jesus to instruct his disciples to sell their **precious garments** and buy swords? Obviously, he felt that they needed swords to defend themselves. Remember, Jesus recently committed an act of disorderly conduct when he turned over the tables of the money changers in the Temple (Luke 19:45). This act has the color and smell of a riot and naturally, he would be wanted by the police of the high priest and by the Romans. Earlier, Jesus said I came not to bring peace but a sword (Matt. 10:34)

The Entry of Jesus Into Jerusalem

In this section, I shall deal with the entry of the true



N.	=	North
S.	=	South
E.	=	East
W.	=	West



– Key –

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Ark | 25. Short Tables |
| 2. Holy of Holies | 26. Slaughterhouse |
| 3. Holy Place | 27. Diaspora Chamber |
| 4. Table of Showbread | 28. Wood Chamber |
| 5. Altar of Incense or Golden Altar | 29. Counselors Chamber |
| 6. The Candlestick | 30. The Supreme Court of the
Seventy Elders |
| 7. Marble Table | 31. Chamber of Holy Vestments |
| 8. Silver Table | 32. Mikvah (Bath) |
| 9. Chamber of Vestments | 33. Chamber of Pancake Maker |
| 10. Knives Chamber | 34. Nicanor Gate |
| 11. Chamber of Vestments | 35. Platform for Priests |
| 12. Twelve Steps Leading into the
Sanctuary | 36. Chamber of Instruments |
| 13. Soreg or Lattice Railing | 37. Oil and Wine Chamber |
| 14. Chamber of Lambs (for sacrifice) | 38. Chamber of Lepers |
| 15. Immersion and Chamber of Bath | 39. Chamber of Salt |
| 16. Chamber of Hearth | 40. Chamber of Washers |
| 17. Chamber of Stones (of unpurified
altar) | 41. Chamber of Animal Skins |
| 18. Chamber of Shewbread | 42. Chamber of Nazirites |
| 19. Laver | 43. Small Sanhedrin (court) of
Twenty-three Judges |
| 20. Well to Draw Water for Laver | 44. Wood Chamber |
| 21. Silver Table | 45. Cloisters, portico |
| 22. Marble Table | 46. Twelve Steps |
| 23. Inner Court | 47. First Small Court of
Twenty-three Judges |
| 24. Twenty-four Rings | 48. Gates to Temple Mount |

Jesus into Jerusalem. All four gospels such as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John mentioned this entry. We don't have all the facts about this event. This event has been watered down and many important facts excluded, and forgeries inserted among the text. In light of this, we don't have the original true details. Therefore, it is the duty of the scholars and the historians to piece together the missing details. This, I shall attempt to do. My conclusions may not be perfect, however, at least, I think you will have a greater understanding of what really happened almost two thousand years ago.

The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is based in the gospels: Matt. 21:1-15, Mark 11:19, Luke 19:27-48, and John 2:13-16. In view of all the historical evidence and statements from the gospels, I am convinced that the purpose Jesus had in mind was to spearhead a *coup de'tat*. This meant the takeover of the government in Jerusalem; and the establishment of the "Kingdom of God" with the assistance of the twelve disciples and his supreme court of seventy men (Luke 10:1). Donovan Joyce²³ tell us that it was Jesus' intention to get to Jerusalem before Pontius Pilate arrived from Caesarea with his legions. It became a practice for the Romans to reinforce their garrison in Jerusalem during Passover and other feast days. Now, all plans had been made and no doubt, Jesus realized that it was **now or never**. Jesus' concentration point and staging area was the Mount of Olives. From there, anyone could observe what was taking place in and around the Temple Plaza (see front cover of this book).

When Jesus arrived on the Mount of Olives, he instructed two of his disciples to go to the nearest village where they would find an ass and a colt tied, and to bring them to him. All of this was prearranged in advance. They brought the animals and placed Jesus on one of them. Now, who rode on the second animal? Matthew

tells us that all of this was done that it might be fulfilled by the prophet saying, "Tell ye the daughters of Sion (Zion), behold thy **king** cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt and the foal of an ass" (Matthew 21:4-7). Matthew took the above verses from Isaiah 6:2:11 and from Zechariah 9:9. Here, Matthew implies that Jesus thought of himself as a king like many other Judean rebels. "A very great multitude spread their garments in the way (in front of him) others cut down branches (palms) from the trees, and strewed them in the way." (Matthew 21:8). The spreading of clothes and palm branches was a common Judean custom, it meant the **coronation** or **installation** of a king (II Kings 9:13). It seems that Jesus attempted to do what Judas and Simon Maccabee did about one hundred and sixty five years earlier. These brothers threw out the Greek Syrians, the flunky priest for the Greeks, cleansed the tower and the Temple with thanksgiving, displayed branches of the palm trees, played instruments of music, they shouted with joy and sang songs because a great enemy was destroyed out of Israel (I Maccabees 13:41-53).

"And the multitude that went before and that followed, cried, saying, *Hosanna* to the son of David: "The crowd of people who were with him cried "Hosanna;"²⁴ this word means save us Oh Lord and the usual concept of it among Judeans is deliverance from the enemy. In this case, the enemy was the Romans.

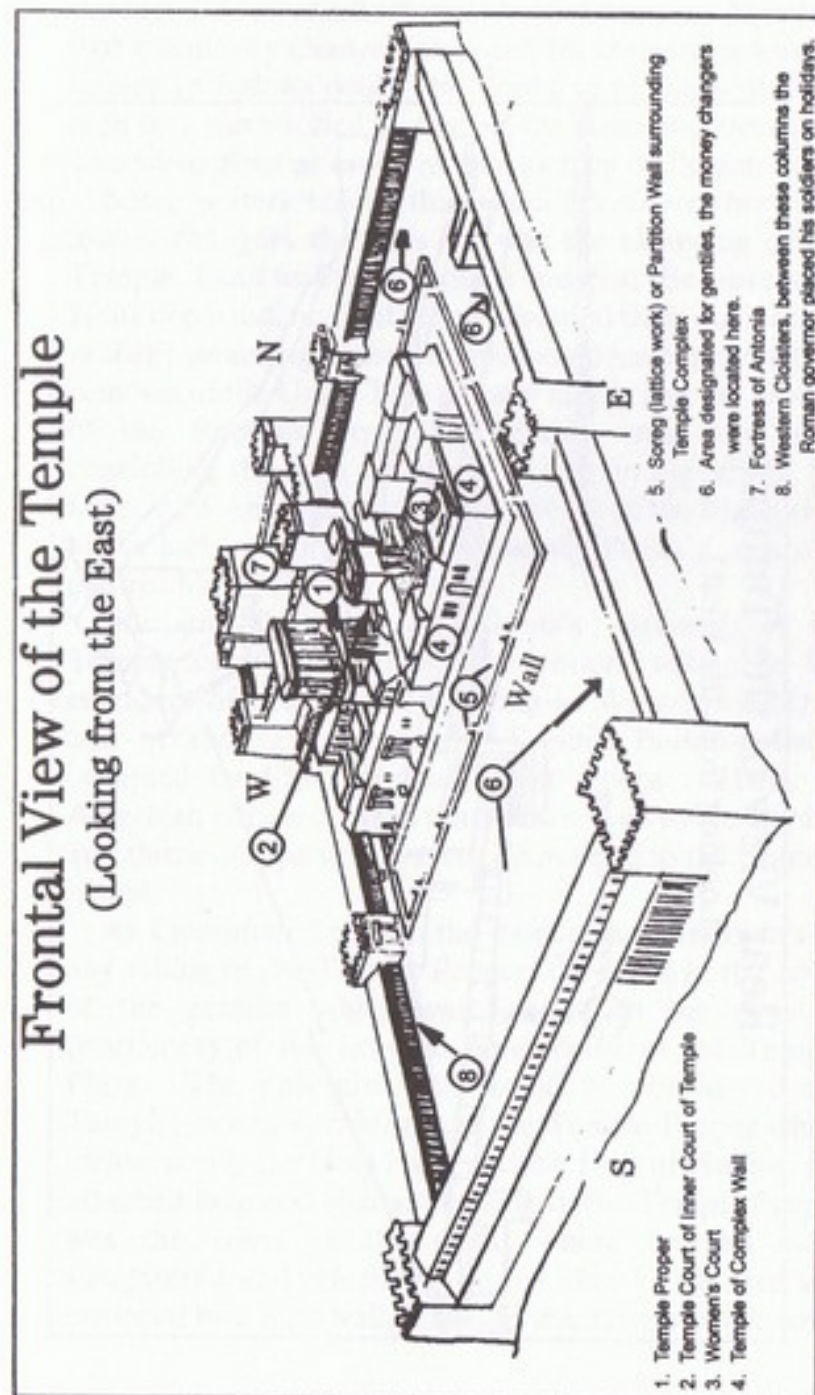
The multitude that was with Jesus were all Judeans and they praised God with a loud voice: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke 19:37-38) The Judeans who were with Jesus, the freedom fighter, were chanting the Psalm 118:25-26 which most people recite in the synagogues today. The fact that the Judeans who were with Jesus included the word **king** in their prayers shows that they considered him a king and

Jesus endorsed this title in the next two verses: "And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master rebuke thy disciples, and he (Jesus) answered and said unto them, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

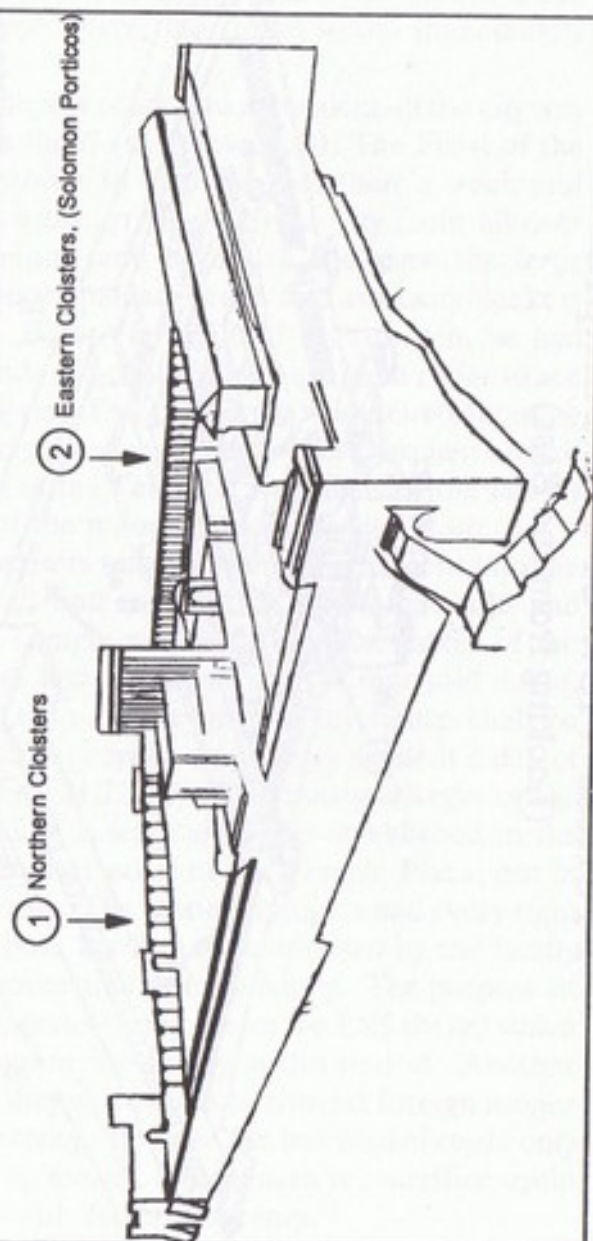
"And when he was come into Jerusalem all the city was moved, Who is this?" (Matthew 21:10) The Feast of the Passover was about to begin in less then a week and many Judeans were arriving into the city from all over the Roman empire and beyond. They saw the large retinue that accompanied Jesus and curiosity seekers followed him. Before he realized his strength, he had tens of thousands of people following him in order to see what was going on. The large crowd continued shouting and singing and grew even larger as they marched toward the outer court of the Temple. This is where the booths and counters of the money changers were set up.

The gospel writers inform us that "Jesus went into the Temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple and overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, "It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayers, but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:12-13). The money-changer or the Temple Market as it was called was established in the cloisters of the outer court of the Temple Plaza, not in the Temple Proper. The money-changers had every right to be there. These booth were controlled by the family of Ananas, an important priestly family. The purpose of the money-changers was to receive the half shekel which every male Israelite had to pay at this period. Another purpose which they served was to convert foreign money into Judean currency. Because the half shekel could only be paid in Judean money, and animals for sacrifice could only be bought with Judean currency.²⁵

Frontal View of the Temple (Looking from the East)



Rear View of the Temple (Looking from the West)



It is evident that the family of Ananas who was one of the high priests received great profits from the high fees that the money-changers imposed for converting foreign money to Judean coins. No doubt some parts of these high fees were levied to pay off the Roman procurators who were after as much money as they could get.

Some writers tell us that when Jesus overthrew the money-changers that this act was the cleansing of the Temple. I can assure you that it was not. Because after Jesus departed, no doubt, they resumed their business. A realistic cleansing of the Temple would have included the removal of the Uncle Tom priestly family and the ousting of the Romans from the Temple area who were controlling the high priest. The Roman captain in the fortress of Antonia kept the vestments of the high priest under lock and key. The Romans did this as a means to control him.²⁶

The gospel's rendition of Jesus's cleansing of the Temple can be compared to vendors selling in the corridors of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. and at the same time, the Capitol Building being occupied by Chinese Communist troops. Then, an American citizen decided that he would go to the Capitol and throw out the vendors, but do nothing to the Chinese troops.

As I mentioned before, the money-changers didn't do any selling in the Temple Proper, they sold in the court of the gentiles which was located in the cloisters (porticoes) of the extreme outer court of the Temple Plaza. The only area that could be considered the Temple, strictly speaking, was the Temple Proper which included only the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, see attached map and charts. Outside of the Temple Proper was the court of the priest where animals were slaughtered and offered up on the altar. This area was enclosed by a high wall. Outside this area was the court

of the Israelites which was separated by a wall. Then, there was the court of the women outside the court of the Israelites. The entire area including the Temple Proper down to the court of the women, I call the Temple Complex, so that it will make it easy for you to understand the various parts, and this area was surrounded by a high wall. Then, outside this high wall was a small partition called in Hebrew the *Soreg* which means the lattice work. There was located outside this partition a sign warning gentiles not to pass beyond this point, if he did, it could cost them their lives.²⁷

If Jesus, in fact, overthrew the table of the money-changers (for whatever reason) that was a very serious act and extremely potentially dangerous business, considering the presence of five hundred battle-dressed Roman legionnaires garrisoned in the fortress on the northwest corner of the Temple Plaza. Moreover, there was the presence of the Temple police but nothing is said about any of these law enforcement units in the gospels.

We don't even hear a whisper or warning from them, why? Previously, when the Judeans demonstrated and rioted against the Romans, the Romans confronted and subdued them immediately.

The true Jesus was a Judean and he had visited the Temple many times, furthermore, he knew that the money-changers had a right to exchange currency and sell in those areas.²⁸ The true account of the militant true Jesus has been deliberately deleted and false accounts inserted in the gospels. Now we can draw our conclusions with ninety percent accuracy of what actually happened when Jesus entered the Temple to overthrow the tables. We can do this because we are now aware of the distortions in the gospels. We have detail background historical knowledge of the Roman occupation of Judea, and we have information that the money-changers were not selling in the Temple Proper

nor anywhere near it. They were selling in the outer court near the perimeter wall. What we have here is the smell of a cover-up and when there is a cover-up, those involved have something to hide and this is it:

Most of the evidence indicate that the true Jesus entered the Temple Plaza to overthrow the existing government of the high priest, and to destroy the Roman garrison there. Moreover, I believe that when Jesus turned over the tables of the money-changers and started a fight with the clerks, that this act was a preconceived scheme of his and well thought out. I believe that Jesus used the commotion or riot as a decoy (trap) to allure the Romans out of their barracks in order to attack and destroy them. But this attempted coup failed and finally the Romans arrested Jesus for:

1. inciting a riot
2. disorderly conduct
3. calling himself a king
4. and rebellion

Like all rebels, he and his accomplices were crucified. Barabas and the other rebels were being detained in Pilate's prison for the same crime Jesus was charged with, insurrection and murder. "And there was one named Barabas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him (the "him" probably refers to Jesus) who had committed murder in the insurrection Mark 15:7, Luke 23:19). Take notice, it is not by accident that Barabas comes into the Jesus' story at the same time, and is in prison at the same time for insurrection and murder, probably for killing a Roman soldier. Ian Wilson in his book, *Jesus: The Evidence* says, that there are some scholars who considered Jesus to have been a guerilla leader and regarded his overturning of the tables of the money-changers as a watered-down account of a

full-scale insurrection".²⁹ The final chapter about the later years of the life of Jesus is yet to be revealed.

What Was The Motive For The Cover-Up?

The motive, no doubt, was to change the true militant Jesus (a fighter against the Romans) to a passive docile one, and to present the Romans in the gospels and their military occupation of the Holy Land as an innocent one with a low profile. With this accomplished, Paul and the Romans decided to blame the Judeans for the death of Jesus. Paul who opposed James,³⁰ the brother of Jesus, in the book of Acts, decided to go and preach to the gentiles within the Roman empire. Also, Paul knew that if he had taught that the Romans oppressed and killed Jesus and the Judeans, he would have been convicted and executed for stirring up trouble within the Roman empire. Paul's preaching and teaching combined Judaism with paganism and the result was called Christianity. The early followers of Jesus in Jerusalem didn't call themselves Christians but *Nazarenes* meaning keepers of the Covenant (which means the keepers of the law). The Hebrew word for keepers in the plural form is "Nozrim". The gentile followers of Paul in Antioch, Syria were called Christians (Acts 11:26) but the apostles and disciples which followed Jesus never called themselves Christians.

The Roman empire in the early fourth century was in religious conflict and turmoil. There were four major religions or ideologies; Paganism, Gnosticism, Christianity and Judaism. At this time, the Roman empire covered all the Mediterranean countries of Africa, the Middle East, Turkey (called Asia), Europe and beyond.

Emperor Constantine of Rome realizing the difficulty of governing a vast empire with different religions,

decided to convert to Christianity. He did this to unite his empire, and made Christianity the state religion. Again, the emperor realized that if he permitted the teaching about the true militant Jesus fighting for the independence of Judea from the domination of Rome; this would not serve his purpose for the unification of the Roman empire. It would only incite other nations to rebellion which were also under the domination of Rome. In view of this, the true facts of the life of the Judean rebel, Jesus, had to be deleted and re-edited to suit the interest of Constantine and his advisors.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER II

REVEALING THE REAL JESUS

- 1) Psalms 2:7,8: 4, 80:17, 144:3, 146:3.
- 2) You can find some of the "son of man" phrases in the first part of the chapters in the book Ezekiel from chapter two through seven.
- 3) The book by Kersey Graves, *The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors*, is very detailed and excellent to read.
- 4) *The Other Bible* by Willis Barnstone, p. 336. See also, "Sod, The Son of The Man, by S.F. Dunlopp, p. 44.
- 5) For complete explanation of the alleged virgin birth prophesy in Isaiah 7:14, read Chapter III of this book.
- 6) Mark 14:22
- 7) *Mishnayoth* vol. 2; Philip Blackman, pp. 189, 190.
- 8) Moses established the first supreme court in ancient Israel, it consisted of seventy elders selected from the twelve tribes of Israel, Numbers 11:16 and Exodus 24:1.
- 9) Josephus' works, *The Antiquities Of the Jews*, Book XV, chapter I, II, and III.
- 10) Matthew 14:34, Mark 6:53, and Luke 5:1.

- 11) *Harpers Bible Dictionary* by Paul Achtemeier, see the word "Maccabees."
- 12) This subject have ben already dealt with in chapter one, part 2 entitled, "Jesus and John, Were They Priests?"
- 13) Heindrich Graetz *History of the Jews*, vol, 11, p. 116. For nudity of gladiators, see Jesephus Antiquities, Book XVI, chapter V.
- 14) *The International Bible Commentary* by F.F. Bruce, pp. 1039 and 1040. See also, Josephus' works, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XVIII, chapter II.
- 15) Josephus's works, *Antiquities*, Book XVII, chapter III and IV.
- 16) Ibid Book, XX, chapters V and VIII.
- 17) *Imperial Rome* by Moses Hadas, p. 167.
- 18) *The Birth of Christianity* by Joel Carmichael, p.30.
- 19) John 1:43-51, Acts 1:11.
- 20) *Mishnayoth*, vol II, Philip Blackman, p. 190. The lamb Was slaughtered by the offerer within the Temple Complex (not within the Temple Proper), the blood was thrown at the side of the altar and the fat burned on the altar; then he took the lamb to his quarters in Jerusalem and roasted it.
- 21) Josephus' works, *Antiquities*, Book XVII, chapter III, section 2.

- 22) *Christianity Before Christ* by John Jackson. The book gives detailed comparison between paganism and Christianity, which indicated and demonstrated that the virgin birth, dying for the sins of the world, public trial, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension into heaven was taught hundreds of years before the Christian savior.
- 23) *The Jesus Scrolls* by Donovan Joyce.
- 24) Hosanna, in Hebrew is hoshana, the Hoshana prayer is recited in most synagogues even until today. This prayer is part of the greater Halell Prayer and is recited on Passover, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Tabernacles, the Day of Atonement, Hanukkah, and the New Moons.
- 25) *The One Volume Bible Commentary* by the Rev. J.R. Dummelow, M.A., p.694.
- 26) Josephus' works, *Antiquities*, Book XV, chapter XI, section 4
- 27) The Temple Complex was a very large area, much larger than a football field. You could compare it to a university campus. You will find many buildings on a university campus, such as the administration building, the library, the gym, the football field, the cafeteria, the student's social hall, the lawn keepers shop, the audio-lingual center, the dormitory, the recreation hall, the chapel, and more. The Temple Proper could be compared to the chapel on a university campus. If a student or anyone sells merchandise in the recreation hall, he has not desecrated the sanctity of the chapel, even though, both of them are located on the university

campus complex.

- 28) *A Thousand Years of Jewish History* by the Rev. Maurice H. Harris, A.M., Ph.D, pp. 74, 75 and 76. This is a very good book about the money changers and the court of the gentiles in the Temple Plaza.
- 29) *Jesus: The Evidence* by Ian Wilson, p.117.
- 30) Paul opposed James, the head of the Judean Assembly in Jerusalem, Acts 21:17-21. Paul wanted to make a name for himself so he went to the gentiles which the true Jesus forbade (Matthew 10:5)

CHAPTER III

SOME CONTRADICTIONS IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

The first book of the New Testament called St. Matthew begins with the following words: "The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt.1:2). Here, in the first chapter of this book, Matthew traces the geneology of Jesus Christ back to King David and Abraham. Matthew traces back to more than thirty-five generations, using male ancestors. Then we come to Joseph, the betroth of Mary (18th verse). "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. (18th verse). "Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make a public example, was minded to put her away privately (19th verse). "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (20th verse).

Now, let me ask my readers, do you see anything contradictory between the first verse and the twentieth verse? If you don't see the contradiction, I shall point it out to you.

In the first verse, Matthew says that "Jesus Christ is the son of David," in the **eighteenth** verse, he says "Mary was espoused (engaged) to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." My point is that if Mary was already found with a child

of the Holy Ghost (Joseph not being the biological father), then Jesus can not be the son of David, nor the son of Abraham. This is Matthew's first contradiction.

The ancient Israelite Jews traced their descent from their paternal ancestors not their maternal ones. This was Israelite law and custom. All descendants were traced through father and son; sometimes, the female was mentioned when a they wanted to indicate that a man had daughters, or when they wanted to show who the mother was, but they never excluded the fathers. There is no parallel to a virgin birth in Hebrew Scriptures, nor in other Jewish sources. The exclusion of the biological father in Judaism is unprecedented and there is no record or prophecy of virgin births in Hebrew Scriptures. However, there is voluminous evidence of virgin births in ancient history and one example in the Greek writings of the New Testament. But, the New Testament is not Hebrew Scripture.

Now, pertaining to the so called virgin births of Jesus, Matthew relates to us in the 22nd verse: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel which being interpreted is, God is with us." (Matt. 1:23)

There are two points that are suspicious about these two verses. (1) Matthew does not tell us the general subject material from where he gets the twenty-third verse. (2) Worse yet, he doesn't even inform us of the name of the prophet who made the prophesy. Perhaps the editor or Matthew doesn't want us to know the true facts. Nevertheless, this twenty-third verse is taken from the book of (Isaiah 7:14). In the Hebrew language and scripture, there is no word for "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14. The Hebrew word that the Christian mistranslated is the word *almah* which means young woman, or young woman

of marriageable age. The word for virgin in Hebrew is *bitulah*, which is not used in Isaiah 7:14. For those who know the Hebrew language and have the Hebrew Scripture, you can find the Hebrew word *bitulah* found in Deuteronomy 22:23, Lev. 21:13, and Judges 21:12. Furthermore, the true meaning of Isaiah 7:14 is in its subject content and in its time frame, let me explain. Isaiah, the prophet, lived during the eighth century B.C. and he prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, king of Judah.

In the eighth century B.C. the Kingdom of Israel was divided into two political entities. The southern kingdom was called Judah or Judea and the northern kingdom was called by various names, such as: Samaria, Ephraim, but the most popular name was the Kingdom of Israel. For many decades, there was religious, cultural and military tension between these two Hebrew kingdoms. In the days of King Ahaz of Judah, there developed a very serious international crisis. The northern Kingdom of Israel joined with Syria in a military alliance, they invaded the Kingdom of Judah, and eventually besieged the City of Jerusalem, the capitol of Judah.

Now, King Ahaz reigned over Jerusalem at this time; he was very wicked, and led his people away from the laws of God into idolatry. After the invasion occurred, the king's advisers informed him that northern Israel made an alliance with Syria. The City of Jerusalem was besieged and totally blocked, no one came in and no one went out, the food supply had to be rationed and the king had to check on the water supply frequently. The king and the entire House of David suffered great anxiety because of the political and military situation. The prophet Isaiah warned King Ahaz of Judah that the invaders desired to conquer Jerusalem in order to set up their own puppet king called Tabeal, and no doubt, the invaders wanted to impose heavy taxation on the people.

In answer to this military scheme, the Lord God said: "It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass." The scheme of these two confederate kings will backfire (Isaiah 7:7). "For the head of Syria is Damascus, (this means the capitol of Syria is Damascus) and the head of Damascus is Rezin (the king); and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people (Isaiah 7:8).

Commentary

"For the head of Syria is Damascus." This means that Damascus is the capitol of Syria, not Jerusalem. "The head of Damascus is Rezin" King Ahaz of Judah, you do not have to worry about King Rezin because God made him the head over Damascus and not the head over Jerusalem. "Within threescore and five (65) years shall Ephraim be broken."

Within sixty-five years, Ephraim (northern Israel) shall be destroyed by the king of Assyria (modern Iraq). The sixty-five years began at the time of the prophesy of the prophet Amos when he said: "and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his lands." The prophesy of Amos began two years before the earthquake and at that time of the earthquake, King Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, (Amos 7:17, 1:1, II Chronicles 23:14-21). "And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." (Isaiah 7:9).

Commentary

"The head of Ephraim is Samaria and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son." This is to say that the

capitol of Ephraim is Samaria and the king of Samaria is Remaliah's son. Remaliah's son, whose name is Pekah, is king over Samaria; and that's his capitol, and he shall not be king over Jerusalem, because Jerusalem belongs to King Ahaz.

Now, we have reached the crucial point of this problem concerning the sign and the woman whose supposed to have conceived and bore a son. "Moreover, the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the heights above" (Isaiah 7:11).

Most all of the top rated scholars agree that the sign is for King Ahaz and his generation and any Christological interpretation for seven hundred years later is inappropriate. King Ahaz was instructed to ask for himself, any sign that exist in the heights of the heavens or that exist in the depths of the earth. Keep in mind that the sign is for King Ahaz and is intended as proof that Ahaz will be delivered from the two invaders, northern Israel and Syria. "But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." "And he said, Hear ye now, Oh House of David, Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?"

King Ahaz refused to ask for a sign because of his arrogance, stubbornness and he thought that God could not perform it, even if he did ask because he believed in another god, not the true God. Then Isaiah said, here ye now Oh House of David." This is an expression of ridicule. Redak said that when a person's ancestor's name is mentioned without referring to his own name, it means that he himself, has no merits. The expression, "Oh House of David," also is pejorative, this means that it has negative and belittling tones. It is the same as if I was talking to President Clinton and I address him like this: Hear me Oh White House. "Is it a small thing for you to weary men?" The Black Hebrew scholar, Ibn Ezra

explains this sentence this way: "Is it a little (thing) that your kings feel that no man has power against you, that you think the same of God?" Also, Isaiah is making the point, that Ahaz is wearing God because he refused to ask for a sign. The sign would have been assurance that the two confederate nations (northern Israel and Syria) would not have been able to capture the City of Jerusalem.

The following verse is rendered from the Hebrew Bible: "Therefore, the Lord, of His own, shall give you a sign: behold the young woman is with child, and she shall bear a son, and she shall call his name "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

Now, I am aware that most Christian Bibles use the word "virgin" instead of young woman. However, in the original Hebrew Scriptures, the word *bitulah* (virgin) is not written, only the word *almah* a young woman. Even if the prophet Isaiah would have used the word virgin, it still would not have changed the fact that the sign was for King Ahaz during his lifetime. Therefore, the sign does not apply to anyone who lived over seven hundred years later. "For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." (Isaiah 7:16) The above mentioned verse means that before the child is able to distinguish between good and evil, this is to say; before he reach the age of intelligence (five or six years old), the two invading kings will be eliminated. This verse proves, without a shadow of a doubt, that the child in question lived during the reign of these two kings.

"The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria," (Isaiah 7:17).

Ephraim, the second name for the northern Kingdom of Israel, rebelled and departed from the House of David

(of the tribe of Judah) right after the death of King Solomon. The God of Israel is saying to King Ahaz, you fear the two invading kings; but the super power that you should fear most is Assyria, which I shall bring into your land.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the upper most part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria." (Isaiah 7:18).

"The Lord God calls forth flying insects to symbolize the two ancient super powers who shall invade the land of Israel and Judah. After the Assyrians destroyed Syria and northern Israel, they conquered all the towns and villages in the land of Judah and even set siege to the City of Jerusalem. Judah became a battle ground where the two ancient super powers, Assyria and Egypt clashed for the military supremacy of the ancient world.

Let us now return to the question of the child. All the evidence, without a doubt, indicate that the child spoken of in Isaiah 7:14 does not refer to anyone who lived hundreds of years after the death of Isaiah and King Ahaz. Moreover, when we consider the entire sequence of all the verses in the seventh chapter of the book of Isaiah, intelligent men and women know that the sign was for King Ahaz. Now, the next question is: Of the child that lived during the time of King Ahaz (750 - 22 B.C.), who was the child and who were his parents? Some scholars have postulated that the child was, Hezekiah, the son of King Ahaz. However, this is impossible, because when we consider the chronology of his years, we discover that Hezekiah was born nine years before his father's reign. Also, pertaining to this child, his parents or one parent would have had to be an outstanding figure in our story; and/or the child would have had to make some kind of impact on the life of King Ahaz. This impact could be implemented directly or indirectly.

Discovery of the Child

"And I (Isaiah) went unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare (bore) a son. Then said the Lord unto me, call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz" (Isaiah 8:3).

This was Isaiah's second son, his first son is mentioned in chapter 7:3. There are at least four other women mentioned in ancient Israel, who were prophetesses, women who were moved by divine inspiration. It is very significant that Isaiah called his wife a prophetess; concerning this matter, I shall expound on a little later.

"For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, my father and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria. (Isaiah 8:4). In this verse, the Lord God is saying that before the child (Maher-shalal-hash-baz) is able to distinguish between his parents and other people, the King of Assyria will come and take away the riches of Damascus (capitol of Syria) and the wealth of Samaria (the capitol of northern Israel). The age in which a child is able to tell the difference between his parents and others is about one and one half to two years old.

The Lord said to Isaiah, call his name (his son is meant) Maher-shalah-hash-baz which means the spoil speedest and the prey hastened. The child mentioned in Isaiah 7:14 is the same child Isaiah called Maher-shalal-hash-baz in 8:4. Now, you will probably say to me, how could it be when in 7:14 his mother is supposed have called him Immanuel. This is the very point, the mother nicknamed him Immanuel. One Hebrew scholar by the name of Rashi supports this position. Another great Black Hebrew, Rabbi Abarbanel, who lived in Moorish Spain, maintained that it is possible that when the mother heard Isaiah call the child Maher-shalal-hash-baz,

a name predicting the taking of spoil and loot, she exclaimed, Immanuel, may God be with us. Moreover, when she exclaimed Immanuel, she was uttering a prophesy. Afterall, God had already said that she shall call his name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). According to God's word, this was her destiny to do this because she was a prophetess (Isaiah 8:30). Likewise, it was Isaiah's duty to call the child Maher-shalal-hash-baz as God commanded. Having a father and mother calling a child by a different name is common; also, nicknames are common.

The name of the child, Immanuel, was the sign that he was supposed to have a great impact on King Ahaz, not so much the child himself. In fact, when Isaiah mentions him in Isaiah 8:4, we don't hear anything else about him, however, we do hear more about the word or slogan Immanuel. Moreover, there was ample evidence, at that time of national crisis of invading Israelites, Syrians, Egyptian, Ethiopians, and Assyrians, that the word Immanuel (God is with us) became a slogan and a national battle cry of hope. We find evidence of this in Isaiah 8:8, where it reads as follows: "And he shall pass through Judah, (the King of Assyria, see verse 7); he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, Immanuel" (God be with us in this time of crisis is meant).

The above verse means that the Assyrian armies invaded the entire land of Judah and came up to the neck of the capitol. The neck of the capitol is the wall of the City of Jerusalem. The head is the capitol of the city itself. In those days the northern Israelites, Syrians, and Assyrians besieged the City of Jerusalem for many years, but could not capture it.

Here is another verse that proves that the word "Immanuel" became a slogan of hope: "Take counsel

together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us." In the Hebrew language, the clause "God is with us" is rendered Immanuel.

In the above verse, the prophet Isaiah is saying that the enemies of the Jews took secret counsel to speak of their plan to destroy Jerusalem, but their conspiracy will not be successful, for God is with us.

The word Immanuel continued to be used as a national slogan of hope right down to the time of King Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz (II Chronicle 32:8).

As I have explained previously, the sign was for King Ahaz and his royal court that accompanied him (Isaiah 7:14 and 7:3). The names of Isaiah's sons were for signs for King Ahaz, for the royal court, and then for all Israel. As it is written: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel for the Lord of hosts, which dwelled in Mount Zion (Isaiah 8:8). The point that the prophet Isaiah was making was that his name and his sons names had important meaning for national and international events. The meaning of the names:

1. Isaiah, the salvation of the Lord.
2. Shiar-Jashub, a remnant shall return (Israelites)
3. Maher-shalal-hash-baz, the spoil speedest the prey hastenest. The spoil and the prey was Syria and northern Israel, captured by the king of Assyria.
4. Immanuel, (the nickname for the above) means, God is with us. This is the nickname for Isaiah's second son, Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

All the personalities that I have mentioned in

connection with the prophet Isaiah lived during his time and the signs and events that I mentioned were completed by the year 711 B.C.

Now, this brings us back to the first chapter of Matthew.

Summary

Jesus is not the son of David, nor a descendant of David as recorded in the first chapter of Matthew. I base my position on the fact that Matthew said that Mary was found with child of the holy ghost (Matt. 1:18). And (he) knew her not til she had brought forth her firstborn son; and call his name Jesus" (Matt. 1:25). Since Jesus did not have a natural father, according to Matthew, Jesus can't be the descendant of King David. In Jewish law and customs, descent is traced through only the males not the females.

Again, Matthew said that a virgin shall be with child, but according to Isaiah 7:14, the Hebrew word *almah* does not mean virgin. Even if the word *almah* had carried the meaning of virgin, it would not carry any weight in support of Matthew's story. I maintain this because the sign, which represents the child, was for King Ahaz in his days and time (8th century B.C.). The sign was not for the time that Joseph, Mary and Jesus was supposed to have lived; which was seven hundred years later. The child was a sign for King Ahaz of Judah, as I have demonstrated.

Hezekiah, The Messianic King

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelled in the land of the shadow of

death, upon them has light shined."

Our prophet Isaiah compared the people of the Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem to blind men who walk in darkness. He did this because the people saw no hope due to the invasion of the king of Assyria into Judah (Isaiah 36:1 - 37:20; II Kings 18:13). The people dwelled in a land of the shadow of death, because they were confronted with famine, captivity and death. But, hope, light, and salvation came to them, finally, by the destruction of the Assyrian army of 185,000 men (Isaiah 37:33, II Kings 19:37, II Kings 19:3).

"Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in the harvest, as man rejoice when they divide the spoil" (Isaiah 9:3).

When the kings of Assyria invaded Israel and Judah, they captured all the towns and cities except the City of Jerusalem. This means that King Ahaz and his son Hezekiah ruled over the City of Jerusalem only. (II Kings 15:29; I Chronicles 5:26, II Kings 17:1-6; II Kings 18:13; II Chronicles 32:1; Isaiah 36:1). In view of the fact that when the Assyrian army was destroyed, the Kingdom of Judah was increased and praised in the eye sight of the nations.

"And not increased the joy:" The top rated Hebrew scholars explain this phrase to mean He has not increased the joy of the enemy to give him victory. "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest." The Israelites rejoiced over the defeat of the Assyrian army just as they did at the spring and fall harvests. The barley harvest took place around the time of the Passover, the wheat harvest, just before the Feast of Weeks, and the fall harvest, just before the Feast of Tabernacles. During these three holidays, all Israelite males had to appear at Jerusalem to celebrate (Exodus, 23:14 and Deuteronomy 16:15-16). "As men rejoice

when they divide the spoil." All men rejoice when they capture the property, booty and wealth of their enemies (Psalms 119:162).

"For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian" (Isaiah 9:4). The triple metaphors yoke, staff, and rod employed in the above verse, symbolizes the trouble, hardship and oppression that the king of Assyria imposed on King Hezekiah of Jerusalem. King Sennacherib of Assyria captured all the cities of Judah and set his generals to besiege the capitol of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was low on supplies, and facing impending danger of destruction and a state of panic had set in deeply. Because of the state of affairs, Hezekiah prayed and God sent a plague which broke and destroyed the Assyrian army (II Kings 19:34-37).

"For the battle of the warriors is with confused noise, and the garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burnings and fuel of fire" (Isaiah 9:5). Although the main force of the one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers were encamped near the border of Egypt or in southern Judea, but no doubt, there were other smaller contingents of soldiers in northern Judea and Israel. These contingents of Assyrian soldiers had to be wiped out and destroyed. Whenever a battle happens; the hoofs of the horses and the clamor of striking the swords against the shields make noises; and the death of the soldiers causes the garments to be soaked in blood, thereby, being eventually burned in the fire.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor mighty god, the everlasting father, prince of peace" (Isaiah 9:6). This verse has been given a Christological interpretation for hundreds of years by the church. The church maintained that this is a prophecy of Jesus Christ. The true meaning

was drawn out of context and placed at a futuristic time when in fact, the interpretation applies to the time of King Ahaz and his son Hezekiah. When the prophet Isaiah saw the vision, the child was already born and this son was already designated and given to be the heir to the throne of his father King Ahaz.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." This parallel statement is used in the passive voice in the Hebrew language and is not written in the future tense. In light of this, we must keep our thoughts in the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah. When we follow closely the events surrounding King Hezekiah and the crisis confronting his nation, it all makes sense. The Talmud and the top rated Hebrew scholars such as Rashi and Redak maintains that Hezekiah was the child and son that was born and given to the nation of Judah. Hezekiah was the descendant of David, heir apparent, the messiah or anointed king, therefore, the deliverer of his nation in a time of grave international crisis. **"And the government shall be on his shoulder."** A better Hebrew translation of the above would be: "the government is on his shoulder". King Hezekiah had the broad serious responsibility to lead, direct, guide and encourage his people during a time of war. As a result, he was called "wonderful, counsellor," because he accepted and gave counsel with his princes and the people (II Chronicles 30:2). He was called mighty god, which means god-like, because he feared God and did what was right. Sometimes the rulers and judges were called gods, especially when they acted righteously. In Exodus 21:6, where it says "unto the judges", in the Hebrew language, the word gods is used and refers to the judges. The child or son was called everlasting fathers, because he was a true dedicated father to the whole nation. George Washington, the first president of America, was called the father of our country. King Hezekiah looked after the affairs of the

nation and his people (II Chronicles 28:1-36, II Kings 18:1-7). King Hezekiah was the everlasting father of his nation, meaning he was father of his nation until his last days on earth. For example, when a person says he or she will love a person forever, they only mean until their death. King Hezekiah was called 'prince of peace.'

"Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hands of Sennacherib, the King of Assyria, and from the hands of all others, and guided them on every side." "And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem and presents to Hezekiah, King of Judah; so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth" (II Chronicles 32:22).

After the Lord had destroyed all of King Hezekiah's enemies, he had complete peace in the land for a long time; but in the days of his father King Ahaz, there was no peace. Read the words of King Hezekiah: "Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou has spoken. He said moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my days (Isaiah 39:8)."

Peace at last, peace at last. Hezekiah was "the Prince of Peace." Moreover, as many commentary on the next verse will show, it should leave no doubt in your mind that Hezekiah was the prince.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of host will perform this" (Isaiah 9:7).

During the latter years of King Hezekiah, his government and territory was increased. However, to fully understand the expansion of his nation in later years we must first get a good understanding of the size of his dominion before the increase took place. As I mentioned before, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah about the year

701 B.C. The book of II Kings 18:13 relates that this Assyrian king came up against all the fenced cities (walled cities) of Judah and captured them. Finally, he set siege to the walled City of Jerusalem and demanded the surrender of the City. King Hezekiah, who once ruled over all the territory of Judah which included about fifty cities and towns, now ruled only within the walled City of Jerusalem. The situation of King Hezekiah can be compared to a once-free bird, which is now locked up in a small cage. The conditions at that time were so serious that it put King Hezekiah in a state of panic (II Kings 19:3).

However, after the defeat and destruction of the "arm of flesh," the Assyrian army, King Sennacherib returned to his own land and was murdered by his sons (II Chronicles 32:21). Because of the destruction of the Assyrian army, Sennacherib was no longer a threat to the territory of Israel and the kingdom of Judah. After the defeat of the Assyrians, many people who took refuge inside of the City of Jerusalem, now returned to their homes in the other towns, cities, and the countryside of Judah and Israel. Many Israelites, whom the kings of Assyria had taken into captivity, previously, escaped and returned to the land of Israel (II Chronicles 30:6). Tens of thousands of Israelites exited the City of Jerusalem in great joy; they could now inhale the breath of air of freedom and return to their homes and farms in other parts of Israel. They could now live without the fear of war; they could now work and get on with their lives, raise families without being cramped up like sardines in a can. The sardine can was the City of Jerusalem with its overcrowded population of refugees from other cities and the countryside.

When peace prevailed in the land of Israel and Judah, Hezekiah was not only the king over the City of Jerusalem, but became king of all the cities, towns, and

countryside in the land of Israel. The territory and government of Hezekiah, which during the Assyrian Wars, was limited only to Jerusalem; but during this time of great peace, his government was increased to include all Israel from the City of Beer Sheba in the South to the district of Dan in the North. The district of Dan was approximately, opposite Lebanon. This period of time fulfills Isaiah's prophecy when he said the following: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to establish it..." King Hezekiah sat on the throne of David and Solomon, but Jesus Christ never sat on the throne of David, nor any other throne. Hezekiah was successful in all his objectives (II Chronicles 32:30) and the Creator of the universe defeated his enemies; but according to the New Testament, the Romans crucified Jesus who was never successful against Rome.

Hezekiah became king when he was twenty-five years old; and at this time, he was king only over the City of Jerusalem, but during the last fifteen years of his life, he was king over all Israel. Hezekiah promulgated a decree that all Israelites must come to Jerusalem to keep Passover no matter how far away they lived. Many people came from all parts of Israel to give allegiance to the God of Israel and to King Hezekiah; his dominion, jurisdiction, and influence increased greatly. (be sure to read II Chronicles 30:1-17, and 31:1)

Now, let us deal with the last part of the sentence in Isaiah 9:7. "and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even forever." Now, according to Isaiah 9:6-7, the child or son was supposed to reign on the throne of David, increase his kingdom, and to establish it with judgement (justice) and righteousness." The word judgement should be justice, because in the Hebrew language, the word "*mishpat*" in this context

means justice, not judgement. The next question is did King Hezekiah establish his kingdom in justice and righteousness? Did he perform the right thing according to the law and will of God?

History indicates that Hezekiah was unlike his father Ahaz, who was very wicked. Ahaz worshiped idol gods, closed the Temple, and burned some of his sons in the fire (II Chronicles 28:1-5). However, Hezekiah was altogether different. He opened the Temple, ordered the priest to clean and sanctify it and to offer the sacrifices to the Lord (II Chronicles 29:3; 29:15; 29:27). Hebrew history confirms the fact that King Hezekiah inherited the throne of David and established his kingdom in justice and righteousness: "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done." Moreover, it is written elsewhere: "And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and true before the Lord his God" (II Chronicles 29:2 and 31:20).

Summary

Isaiah 9:2, "The people that walk in darkness have seen great light." The people that walked in darkness, gloominess, and that dwelled in the land of the shadow of death were Jews that were facing a dim future and death, because of the invasion of the Assyrian army throughout the entire land of Israel. The light that they saw was the destruction of the Assyrian army and the new advent of peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Is Jesus Referred to in Isaiah 52:13 and 53:1-12?

It is the belief of many Christians that Jesus is alluded to

in Isaiah 52:13-15, and all of the 53rd chapter. I shall explain some of the most important verses in these chapters. In fact, like most chapters in the Hebrew Scriptures, these chapters under review speaks primarily about the nation of Israel.

"Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high" (Isaiah 52:13). Most of the Hebrew and Christian scholars agree that the expression "my servant" refers to the nation and people of Israel. For proof, I refer you to Isaiah 44:1. "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen." (read also 44:21 and Jeremiah 30:10).

"As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man" (Isaiah 52:14). Many people were astonished at the nation of the Israelites whom they took into captivity. The nations of the world became surprised at the visage, appearance and low conditions of the Israelites that they put in captivity, slavery, and exile. Moreover, the Jews and Hebrews were persecuted and marred more than any other people. When the prophet Isaiah employed the word "his," Isaiah is referring to the nation and people of Israel in slavery, exile, and under persecution.

"Who has believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The great Hebrew scholar Rashi explains this verse: "Thus will the nations tell to one another, 'Had we heard from others, what we see, it would be unbelievable.'" The arm of the Lord was revealed to Israel. The arm of the Lord is his glory, power, revelation, and greatness that he revealed to ancient Israel, as it is written. "Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm..." (Exodus 15:16; 6:6 and Psalm 147:19). In conclusion, the nations would say to one another if we had not seen with our own eyes the persecution, degradation, and low conditions of the Hebrews, we would not have believed

it; and because we have seen their persecution and oppression, is it to this people that the arm of the Lord has been revealed?

"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." The phrase "For he shall grow up" (grew up) is used in the King James version, but in the revised version of the bible, the past tense is used: "For he grew up." The past tense is correct because the past tense is used in the original Hebrew language. In this verse, the subject "he" is used twice and it refers to the nation and people of Israel collectively. The same logic is used when we say England, she was a great world power; the singular pronoun "she" referred to the entire nation. This logic is also corroborated by other historical and biblical facts; for example, Isaiah 44:1 reads as follows: "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant and Israel whom I have chosen." Jacob is the servant of God and Jacob is a singular noun and this word refers to the entire nation of Israel. Again, it is written in another place: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect..." (Isaiah 42:1). In this verse, the singular noun 'servant' refers collectively to the people of Israel; and this is confirmed, without a doubt, by Isaiah 44:21, which reads as follows: Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shall not be forgotten of me.

Generally, we use the feminine pronoun she to refer to a nation, for example, England "she is a great world power." However, in the book of Isaiah, he constantly uses the masculine pronoun "he." In this chapter, why is this? The reason is that Isaiah had to use the masculine form "he" because "he" agrees in gender with the masculine noun Jacob (Israel) which makes grammatical sense. The conclusion of Hebrew scholars is that when

the word "he" is mentioned in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, it refers to the nation of Israel or its people collectively.

Isaiah 53:2, "And he (Israel) grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground..." Until now, Israel was in captivity before God as a tender plant and as a root which sucks from the dry ground without water. "He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." The meaning of the parable is this: When ancient Israel was in captivity and exile in Assyria (in a low condition) Israel did not have any form or beauty worthy to look upon, other words, there was nothing to admire him for nor to desire him.

The same is true for the African Hebrews that were transported to America as slaves. When various ethnic groups see the low conditions of the Black man in America, they see no reason to admire him nor desire him, but only to beat him merciless, like they did Rodney King.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not." The nation of Israel and the Hebrews are despised and rejected of men; this means despised by the nations of the earth. Isaiah mentions all Israel as one man (Isaiah 44:2) "Fear not, O Jacob, my servant." (44:1) "Yet now here, O Jacob, my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen." The nation of Israel is a people "of sorrow and acquainted with grief." This means a people who endure pain and great suffering like the African Hebrews in America.

"And we hid as it were our faces from him." The correct translation from the original Hebrew is thus: "and as one who hides his face from us." The famous bible commentator, A.S. Hartom explains this expression like

this: When the oppressors see the Judeans and the Hebrews, the sight of them arouses hatred and many of the slave masters and their sympathizers hid or turned their faces so they would not have to look upon the African Hebrews. This kind of attitude is very wide spread in America, where many whites would move away from Blacks so they will not have to look upon them nor associate with them.

At this time, I don't see any need to explain all the verses in this chapter. I think most of my readers understand the point that the word "he" so frequently used, refers to the Israelites as a whole nation and not to one man.

An Overview

In the book of Isaiah, 52:1-6, the prophet emphasizes that Zion (Israel and Judah) shall be exalted from its low state of captivity and shall be redeemed like she was redeemed from the oppression of ancient Egypt.

The book of Isaiah 52:7-2 proclaims the redemption which shall appear on the mountains of Judah; and the preparation of the captive exiles to return to their country, for the Lord is their leader and He will fight for them.

Isaiah 52:13-15 describes the situation of the servant of the Lord (Israel) after the redemption, and stress the change from physical and psychological oppression to freedom, statehood, and exaltation. Furthermore, it is important to remember that these verses include the words of the God of Israel.

However, in Isaiah 53:1-10, these words consist of the words of the various nations. Isaiah saw the vision of the Lord-(Isaiah 1-1) When the Lord spoke in the vision he recorded the words of the Lord; and when the nations

spoke, he recorded those words also. Moreover, in Isaiah 53:11 the Creator spoke these words: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servants justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities." The iniquities of the nation are meant. The Israelites bore the iniquities of the nations by suffering from slavery, persecution, and oppression, as the African Hebrews suffered in America. Also, in Isaiah 53:1-10, the nations confessed that they sinned against the Israelites and that Israel was for them atonement and they recognized now, the greatness of the returned Israel. Furthermore, it is probable that beginning with verse seven the prophet spoke. In Isaiah 53:11-12, the God of Israel spoke and confirmed the confession of the nations that they sinned against Israel by persecuting them.

Postscript

I could have written a book of a thousand pages but the research and time would have required another two years to complete. It is my belief that I have not dealt with every issue or question that may be on the minds of my readers; nevertheless, I hope that, with the help of the Creator, I have given you a better understanding of what actually transpired in ancient Judea. Although I have shared much knowledge with you, I don't claim to know it all and the more I learn, the more I realize how much more there is to know.

In the near future, I intend to write a sequel to this book in order to cast more light on this period of Roman dominated Judea/Palestine. In closing, I am asking you to buy as many copies of this book as possible. Your generous extra orders and purchases will enable me to continue to keep this book in print. I am thanking you in advance for your warm hearted understanding and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rudolph R. Windsor

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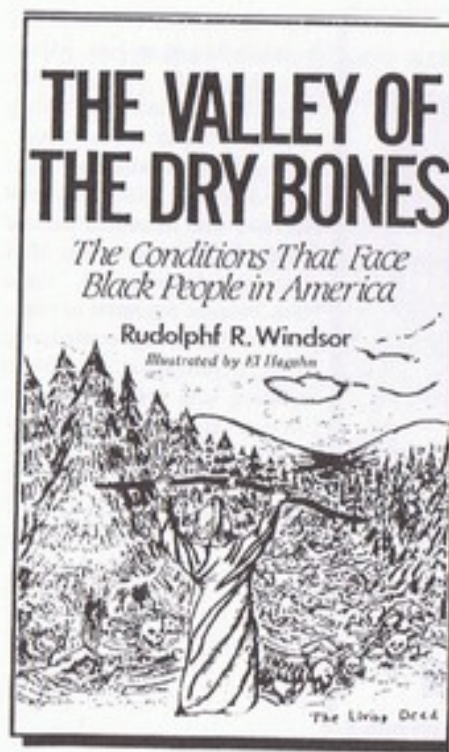
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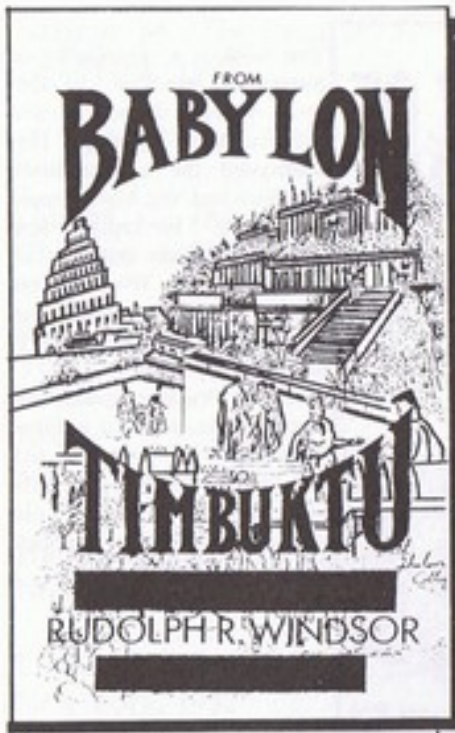
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